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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

55 Ninth Street State Compensation Insurance Fund

2001.1039E

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Draft EIR Publication Date: December 13, 2003

Draft EIR Public Hearing Date: January 15, 2004

Draft EIR Publication Comment Period: December 13, 2003 – January 27, 2004

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Written comments on this document should be sent to:

Paul E. Maltzer

Environmental Review Officer

San Francisco Planning Department

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DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT



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TO: Distribution List for the 55 Ninth Street State Compensation Insurance Fund Draft EIR

FROM: Paul Maltzer, Environmental Review Officer

SUBJECT: Request for the Final Environmental Impact Report for the 55 Ninth Street State Compensation Insurance Fund Office Project (Case Numbers 2001.1039E)

This is the Draft of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 55 Ninth Street State Compensation Insurance Fund Office Project. A public hearing will be held on the adequacy and accuracy of this document. After the public hearing, our office will prepare and publish a document titled "Summary of Comments and Responses" which will contain a summary of all relevant comments on this Draft EIR and our responses to those comments; it may also specify changes to this Draft EIR. Public agencies and members of the public who testify at the hearing on the Draft EIR will automatically receive a copy of the Comments and Responses document, along with notice of the date reserved for certification; others may receive such copies and notice on request or by visiting our office. This Draft EIR together with the Summary of Comments and Responses document will be considered by the City Planning Commission in an advertised public meeting and certified as a Final EIR if deemed adequate.

After certification, we will modify the Draft EIR as specified by the Comments and Responses document and print both documents in a single publication called the Final Environmental Impact Report. The Final EIR will add no new information to the combination of the two documents except to reproduce the certification resolution. It will simply provide the information in one rather than two documents. Therefore, if you receive a copy of the Comments and Responses document in addition to this copy of the Draft EIR, you will technically have a copy of the Final EIR.

We are aware that many people who receive the Draft EIR and Summary of Comments and Responses have no interest in receiving virtually the same information after the EIR has been certified. To avoid expending money and paper needlessly, we would like to send copies of the Final EIR to private individuals only if they request them.

If you would like a copy of the Final EIR, therefore, please fill out and mail the postcard provided inside the back cover to the Office of Environmental Review within two weeks after certification of the EIR. Any private party not requesting a Final EIR by that time will not be mailed a copy. Public agencies on the distribution list will automatically receive a copy of the Final EIR.

Thank you for your interest in this project.



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City and County of San Francisco
Planning Department

55 NINTH STREET
STATE COMPENSATION INSURANCE FUND

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

2001.1039E

State Clearinghouse No. 2002122005

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Paul E. Maltzer
Environmental Review Officer
San Francisco Planning Department
1660 Mission Street
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55 Ninth Street, State Insurance Compensation Fund
Draft Environmental Impact Report

Table of Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Summary	1
A. Introduction	1
B. Project Description	1
C. Main Environmental Effects	2
D. Mitigation Measures	10
E. Significant Impacts	16
F. Alternatives to the Proposed Project	16
G. Areas of Controversy and Issues to be Resolved	17
II. Project Description	19
A. Project Sponsor's Objectives	19
B. Project Location	19
C. Project Characteristics	21
D. Project Approval Requirements	31
III. Environmental Setting and Impacts	35
A. Land Use, Zoning and General Plan Consistency	35
B. Visual Quality/Urban Design	43
C. Shadow and Wind	52
D. Transportation	74
E. Growth Inducement	102
IV. Mitigation Measures Proposed to Minimize the Potential Adverse Impacts of the Project	103
A. Mitigation Measures	104
B. Improvement Measures	109
V. Significant Environmental Effects Which Cannot be Avoided if the Proposed Project is Implemented	111
VI. Alternatives to the Proposed Project	113
A. Alternative A: No Project	114
B. Alternative B: Code-Compliant Alternative	115
VII. EIR Authors	117
VIII. Appendices	121
A. Initial Study	A-1
B. Wind Tunnel Study	B-1
C. Intersection Level of Service Designations	C-1
D. Distribution List	D-1

List of Figures

Figure 1	Project Location	20
Figure 2	Site Plan	22
Figure 3	Basement Floor Plan - Level 1	23
Figure 4	Basement Floor Plan - Level 2	24
Figure 5	Ground floor Plan	25
Figure 6	Second Floor Plan	26
Figure 7	Typical Upper Floor Plan	27
Figure 8	West Elevation (View from Ninth Street)	28
Figure 9	North Elevation (View from 1275 Market Street)	29
Figure 10	North South Section	30
Figure 11	Existing Zoning Districts in the Project Vicinity	36
Figure 12	Existing Height and Bulk Districts in the Project Vicinity	37
Figure 13	View Looking South on Ninth Street	44
Figure 14	View Looking North on Ninth Street	45
Figure 15	Shadow Patterns - December 21 (10 a.m., Noon, 3 p.m. PST)	54
Figure 16	Shadow Patterns - March 21 (10 a.m., Noon, 3 p.m. PST))	55
Figure 17	Shadow Patterns - June 21 (10 a.m., Noon, 3 p.m. PST)	56
Figure 18	Shadow Patterns - September 21 (10 a.m., Noon, 3 p.m. PST)	57
Figure 19	Wind Test Point Location Map	63
Figure 20	Transportation Study Area	79
Figure 21	Existing Transit Network	82

List of Tables

Table 1	Wind Comfort Analysis	64
Table 2	Wind Hazard Analysis	67
Table 3	Intersection Levels of Service, Existing Conditions	81
Table 4	Intersection Levels of Service, Existing and Existing Plus Project Conditions	92
Table 5	Intersection Levels of Service 2020 Cumulative Conditions	99
Table 6	Proposed Project's Contribution to Traffic Volumes, 2015 Conditions	100

I. SUMMARY

A. INTRODUCTION

This is the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed expansion of the State Compensation Insurance Fund's San Francisco office at 1275 Market Street, by construction of an adjacent office building at 55 Ninth Street. The new 12-story office building would contain approximately 268,000 gross square feet (gsf) of office space and 134 parking spaces in a two-level below-grade parking garage.

An application for environmental evaluation for the 55 Ninth Street Project (the "Project") was filed on October 25, 2001. On the basis of the Initial Study published on November 30, 2002, the San Francisco Planning Department determined that an EIR would be required (see Appendix A – Initial Study). This EIR is intended to provide information on the environmental effects concerning the proposed project to satisfy the requirements of CEQA and allow the San Francisco Planning Commission to make a decision on the project.

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION (page 19)

The project site is located at 55 Ninth Street (Assessor's Block 3701, Lot 063), in the block bounded by Ninth, Market, Eighth, and Mission Streets in the Mid-Market neighborhood, and is located on the northeast side of Ninth Street. The site is essentially flat, and is currently occupied by a surface parking lot with approximately 173 parking spaces. The project site is located in the C-3-G (Downtown General Commercial) Zoning District and a 120-X Height and Bulk District.

The State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF), the project sponsor, proposes to construct a 12-story, approximately 268,000 gross square foot office building at the project site, which is adjacent to the south of the existing 17-story SCIF headquarters at 1275 Market Street (Assessor's Block 3701, Lot 064). The new building would be approximately 159 feet to the top of the 11th floor and 198 feet high, including mechanical penthouse, and would include a two-level below-grade parking garage with about 134 spaces (93 self-park and 41 tandem). The proposed building would be connected to the existing SCIF office

building by a pedestrian bridge located on the second floor and a service tunnel connection below the second level of the parking garage. The proposed project would provide approximately 25,392 square feet of public, exterior open space between the proposed new building and the existing 1275 Market Street building. The pedestrian entrance to the new building and access to off-street parking and loading would be from Ninth Street, with an additional truck exit on Laskie Street, which connects with Mission Street.

Following completion and certification of the Final EIR, the project would require the following approvals:

- Amendment to Zoning Map 7-H to reclassify the project site from 120-X Height and Bulk District to a 200-S Height and Bulk District, pursuant to Section 302 of the *Planning Code*.
- An exception to the bulk requirements of the 200-S Height and Bulk District.
- Planning Commission approval of the building permit application pursuant to *Planning Code* Section 309 (Permit Review in a C-3 District).
- Amendment to Map 5 of the Downtown Area Plan of the *General Plan* to reclassify the project site from a 120-X Height and Bulk District to a 200-S Height and Bulk District, pursuant to Section 340 of the *Planning Code*.
- Department of Public Works approval of a merger of Lot 63 (the proposed construction site) and Lot 64 (containing the existing 1275 Market Street SCIF building).
- Department of Building Inspection approvals of demolition and building permits.
- Exceptions pursuant to Section 148(a) from wind limits, Section 270(d) from bulk limits, and approval of the short-term parking.

As an office project, the project would also be subject to *Planning Code* Section 321 - Office Development: Annual Limit.

C. MAIN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

This EIR for the Project focuses on the issues of visual quality, wind, shadow, and transportation. All other potential environmental effects were found to be at a less-than-significant level or to be mitigated to a less-than-significant level with mitigation measures to be implemented by the project sponsor.

(Please see the Initial Study, included in this document as Appendix A, for analysis of other environmental issues.) In addition, this EIR discusses land use, zoning and general plan consistency for informational purposes, although these impacts were found to be less-than-significant in the Initial Study.

Land Use, Zoning and General Plan Consistency (page 35)

The project site is within the C-3-G (Downtown General Commercial) Zoning District and a 120-X Height and Bulk District. The San Francisco *Planning Code* describes the C-3-G District as follows: “This district covers the western portions of downtown and is composed of a variety of uses: Retail, offices, hotels, entertainment, clubs and institutions, and high-density residential. Many of these uses have a citywide or regional function, although the intensity of development is lower here than in the downtown core area. As in the case of other downtown districts, no off-street parking is required for individual commercial buildings, but in portions of this district automobile parking is a major land use, serving this district and the adjacent office and retail core areas. In the vicinity of Market Street, the configuration of this district reflects easy accessibility by rapid transit.”

The project site is in the Mid-Market area, just south of the Civic Center. The area surrounding the project site contains a mixture low-, mid-, and high-rise buildings with uses including residential, office, hotel, retail, commercial, restaurant, bar, parking, institutional, public and cultural facilities, and government offices. Most buildings are one to five stories in height; taller buildings range from eight to 30 stories.

The project site is within the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency’s Mid-Market Redevelopment Project Area for the proposed Mid-Market Redevelopment Plan and Mid-Market Redevelopment Special Use District. In addition, the project site is approximately one-half block north of the South of Market Neighborhood, one of San Francisco’s eastern neighborhoods that are the subject of a community planning process.

While the proposed project would increase the density of use, number of employees, and amount of vehicles to the site, it would not essentially change the existing mixed-use character or physical

arrangement of the area. The proposed office use would be generally compatible with the existing variety of uses in a dense urban area.

Visual Quality and Urban Design (page 43)

The Mid-Market neighborhood of San Francisco, site of the proposed project, is characterized by a variety of building heights, ages, forms, and styles. Uses are also varied, and include residential, hotel, retail, commercial, restaurant, institutional, and government offices. A few high-rise buildings are interspersed among low- and mid-rise buildings. The range of low- and mid-rise building heights contributes dips, smaller peaks, and variety within this urban pattern.

The visual character of the immediate project vicinity is varied, with contrasting building heights, massing, styles, and uses. The project site is currently occupied by a landscaped parking lot. Ninth Street, between Market and Mission Streets, is occupied by surface parking and buildings ranging in height from one to 17 stories, constructed at various times during the twentieth century, and occupied by retail, hotel, restaurant, bar, office, residential and institutional uses. High-rise buildings near the project site include the 11-story San Francisco Merchandise Mart building on the southeast side of Market Street (facing the project site from the opposite side of Ninth Street), and the existing 17-story SCIF headquarters at 1275 Market Street on the corner of Ninth Street (northwest of the proposed construction site).

The proposed project would result in a visual change and would increase the scale of development of the project site, because it would replace a landscaped parking area with a 12-story office building that would be 159 feet in height, plus a 39-foot mechanical penthouse.

The proposed 159-foot-tall, plus a 39-foot tall mechanical penthouse, project would be higher than most buildings in the immediate vicinity, which are one to five stories in height; however, it would be similar in height to, or lower than, the highest buildings in the area, and similar in height to the adjacent SCIF headquarters. The design, materials, and exterior treatment of the proposed project would contrast in character with older buildings in the area, but would be consistent with the contemporary buildings in the area. While the project would be a noticeable new structure and would be fully or partially visible from some nearby and distant viewpoints, it would not represent a new form, a substantial increase in

the existing scale of development, or a substantial new element in the existing skyline and urban character. Rather, it would represent an incremental increase in the number of high-rise buildings of contemporary design in the Mid-Market neighborhood. The cumulative effects on visual quality of the proposed project and other proposed high-rise buildings at One Polk/Two Fell Street, at 1177 Market Street, at 1160 Mission Street, at 1407-1435 Market Street, and the Mercy Housing Project on Mission Street, would be noticeable in the area but not significant.

Shadow (page 52)

On the winter solstice, if not for existing buildings, when the sun rises farthest south of east, shadow from the project could reach the farthest north and the farthest west, and could reach the southernmost and western reaches of Civic Center Plaza between 8:22 AM, the first Proposition K minute, and 8:45 AM. This would be a morning phenomenon; project shadow could not reach the Civic Center Plaza at any other time of day. However, the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium would intercept all the shadow from the proposed project that would otherwise fall on Civic Center Plaza at 8:22 AM, 8:30 AM, and 8:45 AM, on December 21. The winter solstice represents the maximum shadowing of Civic Center Plaza by the project; shadows on the Plaza during all other days of the year would be smaller. Thus, no new shadow from the project would reach Civic Center Plaza.

Shadows from the proposed project could not reach United Nations Plaza between one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset at any time during the year, due to its location northeast of the project site.

The proposed project would shade a small portion of Market Street in the winter months, and would shade portions of Ninth Street in the spring, summer, and fall months. The project would shade the northwestern end of Laskie Street, and the open space between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings, throughout the year.

Wind (page 60)

Wind tunnel tests were conducted for the project site and vicinity under three scenarios: 1) the setting under existing conditions; 2) existing conditions plus the proposed project; and 3) cumulative

development conditions, including the proposed project. Wind speed measurements were taken at 30 pedestrian-level locations at or near the project site.

Existing conditions are among the windiest in San Francisco. The average wind speed for all 30 test points in this general vicinity are slightly above 14 mph. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more occur at 17 of the total 30 locations. Of the remaining locations, nine meet the *Planning Code* pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11 mph. The highest wind speeds in the vicinity (23 mph) occur northwest of the site, at the southernmost corner of Fox Plaza, near the intersection of Market and Polk Streets. The *Planning Code* wind hazard criterion is currently exceeded at seven of the 30 test locations; the total duration of the exceedance is 210 hours per year.

Conditions with the project would be slightly less windy. The average wind speed for all 30 test points would decrease slightly, but would equal 14 mph. Wind speeds in pedestrian areas would range from nine to 23 mph. The project would eliminate the exceedance of the existing pedestrian-comfort criterion located at the northwest corner of the existing SCIF building on Ninth Street, and would create two new exceedances downwind of the site along the east side of Ninth Street. Eight of the total 30 points would meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11 mph.

With the project, the wind hazard criterion would be exceeded at five locations, for a total duration of 188 hours per year. The wind hazard criterion is currently exceeded at seven of the 30 locations, with the total duration occurring for 210 hours per year. The project would add two new hazard exceedances, with a duration of 38 hours per year. The project would eliminate four existing hazard exceedances, with a duration of 37 hours per year. In addition to eliminating four existing exceedances and adding two new exceedances, the project would affect the duration of three existing exceedances by decreasing the duration of the three points by 22 hours per year. Overall, the total duration of the hazard exceedances with the project in place would be 188 hours per year, a decrease of about 22 hours per year from the 210 hours per year duration of the existing wind hazard exceedances, a reduction of over 10 percent from the existing conditions.

Given the existing windy conditions of the site and vicinity and the modest changes in wind conditions that can reasonably be expected from the project, it may not be possible to design any structure that fully

meets the goals of the project and that fully reduces ambient wind speeds to meet the Section 148 comfort criteria of the *Planning Code* at all locations. Experience indicates that for buildings in very windy areas it is common for new buildings to eliminate some existing exceedances and create others. For the project site, reducing the size or changing the design of the project may not have any effect on the pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances; however, the duration of existing hazard exceedances could be affected by such changes. The addition of large street trees (30 to 40 feet wide and 40 to 50 feet tall) along the Ninth Street sidewalk adjacent to the site could noticeably reduce wind speeds that would occur in pedestrian area, but this measure would not necessarily provide sufficient wind reductions to eliminate the existing exceedances of the pedestrian-comfort criterion or the new exceedances of the hazard criterion.

Transportation (page 74)

The transportation study performed for the proposed project reviewed conditions at eight key intersections in the vicinity of the project site. All eight intersections operate at Level of Service (LOS D) or better during the PM peak hour, with delays ranging from 15.4 to 35.0 seconds per vehicle. (Intersection service levels range from LOS A, which indicates free flow or excellent conditions with little delay, to LOS F, which indicates congested or overloaded conditions with extremely long delays. The City of San Francisco considers LOS A through D to be acceptable traffic conditions at an intersection, while LOS E and F are considered unacceptable.)

The project as proposed is estimated to generate about 411 new weekday PM peak hour person-trips, of which 103 would be new vehicle trips. Project-generated traffic would result in minor increases in the average delay per vehicle at the study intersections, and all intersections would continue to operate at the same service levels as under existing conditions.

The proposed project would generate about 239 new transit trips during the weekday PM peak hour. These transit trips would use nearby Muni lines and regional transit lines, and may include transfer to other Muni bus and light rail lines or regional transit providers. The addition of the project-generated riders would not substantially increase the peak hour capacity utilization, or exceed the capacity utilization standards of Muni or the regional transit providers.

As an office use in the C-3 District, the *Planning Code* would not require the project to provide parking, although the proposed project would be able to provide parking under the accessory parking and replacement parking provisions. The proposed project would provide 134 parking spaces, less than the 155 parking spaces that would be allowed as accessory and replacement parking.

The proposed project would generate a total parking demand of about 304 spaces, of which 260 would be long-term office employee demand, and 44 would be short-term visitor demand. Since the proposed project would provide 134 parking spaces, there would be a shortfall of 170 spaces. Currently, the existing parking facilities in the vicinity of the proposed project are not fully occupied during the weekday hours. Therefore, it is anticipated that the parking demand associated with the office uses could be accommodated at nearby public off-street facilities. The proposed project would displace the existing public parking facility on the site, resulting in the elimination of about 173 parking spaces, but the nearby parking facilities would also have sufficient capacity to accommodate these displaced vehicles. In any event, the availability of parking spaces (or lack thereof) is not a permanent physical condition, but changes over time as people change their modes and patterns of travel. Parking deficits are considered to be social effects, rather than impacts on the physical environment as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act.

The proposed project would generate an estimated 250 new pedestrian trips to the surrounding streets during the weekday PM peak hour. These new pedestrian trips could be accommodated on the existing sidewalk and crosswalks adjacent to the project site and would not substantially affect the current pedestrian conditions along both Ninth Street and Market Street.

The 41 bicycle spaces, four showers and eight clothes lockers of the proposed project would meet the San Francisco *Planning Code* requirements for the provision of seven bicycle spaces, four showers and eight lockers. The proposed project would generate an increase in both the numbers of vehicles and bicyclists in the vicinity of the project site. However, this increase would not be substantial enough to affect bicycle travel in the area.

The proposed project would provide four off-street loading spaces, which would meet the San Francisco *Planning Code* requirements for the number and size of the off-street loading facilities. The proposed

loading supply also would accommodate the anticipated demand for 2.6 loading spaces during an average hour, and 3.2 spaces during the peak hour.

Project construction is expected to take about 22 months, with staging of most construction equipment and materials occurring primarily within the site and from the adjacent sidewalks on Ninth and Laskie Streets. It is anticipated that the proposed project frontage on Ninth Street would be closed throughout the construction period, and a temporary pedestrian walkway would be constructed in the adjacent parking lane. This parking lane is a tow-away lane during the evening commute period (which allows for an additional travel lane on Ninth Street). As such, during this time, there would be one less travel lane on Ninth Street for the length of the project site. No regular travel lanes on Ninth Street would need to be closed for construction. It is not anticipated that any Muni bus stops would need to be relocated during construction of the project.

Throughout the construction period, there would be a flow of construction-related trucks into and out of the site. It is anticipated that the addition of construction worker-related vehicle or transit trips would not substantially affect the transportation conditions, and any impacts on the vehicle or transit network would be similar to, or less than, those for the proposed project. The daily presence of 50 to 200 construction workers at the project site, depending on the phase of construction, would generate a temporary parking demand.

Under year 2020 Cumulative conditions, four study intersections would operate at LOS E or F during the weekday PM peak hour. At these intersections, the proposed project would contribute 0.3 percent or less of the total 2020 Cumulative traffic volumes and would contribute 4.2 percent or less of the growth in traffic volumes between Existing and 2020 Cumulative conditions. Therefore, the project would not have a significant effect on cumulative transportation conditions.

Growth Inducement (page 102)

The proposed project would add 268,000 gross square feet of office space, and intensify the use of the site, but would not be expected to substantially alter development patterns in the Mid-Market area or elsewhere in San Francisco. The project site is in an urbanized area that is intensively developed and

that already supports substantial amounts of government office, residential, hotel, retail, commercial, and restaurant development in surrounding blocks.

The addition of an office building would increase the daily population on the project site by approximately 1,200 employees. Some of these would be SCIF employees relocated from other locations in downtown San Francisco. In addition to employees who would be relocated from these other locations when the proposed project is completed, SCIF projects a total of 444 new positions in the first year of operation, and another 570 positions over the next five years. Many of the 1,200 relocated and new SCIF employees accommodated at the project site would already be living in the City. Others would come from outside San Francisco, and may seek housing within the City boundaries. The number of employees relocating from outside San Francisco would be small in proportion to San Francisco's population, and would not represent a substantial growth in population or concentration in the neighborhood, City, or region.

The proposed project is located in an urban area and would not necessitate or induce the extension of municipal infrastructure. In view of the above, there is no evidence to suggest that the project would result in additional development in the project site vicinity that would not otherwise occur.

D. MITIGATION MEASURES (page 103)

MEASURES PROPOSED AS PART OF THE PROJECT

Construction Air Quality

The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) to spray the project site with water during demolition, excavation, grading, and site preparation activities; spray unpaved construction areas with water at least twice per day; cover stockpiles of soil, sand, and other such material; cover trucks hauling debris, soils, sand or other such material; and sweep surrounding streets during these periods at least once per day to reduce particulate emissions. Ordinance 175-91, passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, the project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) to obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose.

The project sponsor shall require the project contractor(s) to maintain and operate construction equipment so as to minimize exhaust emissions of particulates and other pollutants, by such means as prohibiting idling motors when equipment is not in use or when trucks are waiting in

queues, and implementing specific maintenance programs to reduce emissions for equipment that would be in frequent use for much of the construction period.

Hazards (Underground Storage Tanks)

The project sponsor shall evaluate the presence of the suspected UST located at the entrance to the existing parking lot on the site. If a UST is found, it shall be removed by the project sponsor, and all work shall be conducted in accordance with regulatory requirements. In the case a UST is found, surrounding soils shall be tested, and any soil found to be contaminated at or above potentially hazardous levels shall be handled and disposed in accordance with the Mitigation Measure for Hazards (Contaminated Soil), below.

Hazards (Contaminated Soil)

Step 1: Preparation of Site Mitigation Plan

If, based on the results of the soil tests conducted, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) determines that the soils on the project site are contaminated with lead or other contaminants at or above potentially hazardous levels, the DPH shall determine if preparation of a Site Mitigation Plan (SMP) is warranted. If such a plan is requested by the DPH, the SMP shall include a discussion of the level of contamination of soils on the project site and mitigation measures for managing contaminated soils on the site, including, but not limited to: 1) the alternatives for managing contaminated soils on the site (e.g., encapsulation, partial or complete removal, treatment, recycling for reuse, or a combination); 2) the preferred alternative for managing contaminated soils on the site and a brief justification; and 3) the specific practices to be used to handle, haul, and dispose of contaminated soils on the site. The SMP shall be submitted to the DPH for review and approval. A copy of the SMP shall be submitted to the Planning Department to become part of the case file.

Step 2: Handling, Hauling, and Disposal of Contaminated Soils

(a) specific work practices: If based on the results of the soil tests conducted, DPH determines that the soils on the project site are contaminated with lead or other contaminants at or above potentially hazardous levels, the construction contractor shall be alert for the presence of such soils during excavation and other construction activities on the site (detected through soil odor, color, and texture and results of on-site soil testing), and shall be prepared to handle, profile (i.e., characterize), and dispose of such soils appropriately (i.e., as dictated by local, state, and federal regulations, including OSHA lead-safe work practices) when such soils are encountered on the site.

(b) dust suppression: Soils exposed during excavation for site preparation and project construction activities shall be kept moist throughout the time they are exposed, both during and after work hours.

(c) surface water runoff control: Where soils are stockpiled, visqueen shall be used to create an impermeable liner, both beneath and on top of the soils, with a berm to contain any potential surface water runoff from the soil stockpiles during inclement weather.

(d) soils replacement: If necessary, clean fill or other suitable material(s) shall be used to bring portions of the project site, where contaminated soils have been excavated and removed, up to construction grade.

(e) hauling and disposal: Contaminated soils shall be hauled off the project site by waste hauling trucks appropriately certified with the State of California and adequately covered to prevent dispersion of the soils during transit, and shall be disposed of at a permitted hazardous waste disposal facility registered with the State of California.

Step 3: Preparation of Closure/Certification Report

After excavation and foundation construction activities are completed, the project sponsor shall prepare and submit a closure/certification report to DPH for review and approval. The closure/certification report shall include the mitigation measures in the SMP for handling and removing contaminated soils from the project site, whether the construction contractor modified any of these mitigation measures, and how and why the construction contractor modified those mitigation measures.

Cultural Resources

Based on a reasonable presumption that archeological resources may be present within the project site, the following measures shall be undertaken to avoid any potentially significant adverse effect from the proposed project on buried or submerged historical resources. The project sponsor shall retain the services of a qualified archeological consultant having expertise in California prehistoric and urban historical archeology. The archeological consultant shall undertake an archeological testing program as specified herein. In addition, the consultant shall be available to conduct an archeological monitoring and/or data recovery program if required pursuant to this measure. The archeological consultant's work shall be conducted in accordance with this measure at the direction of the Environmental Review Officer (ERO). All plans and reports prepared by the consultant as specified herein shall be submitted first and directly to the ERO for review and comment, and shall be considered draft reports subject to revision until final approval by the ERO. Archeological monitoring and/or data recovery programs required by this measure could suspend construction of the project for up to a maximum of four weeks. At the direction of the ERO, the suspension of construction can be extended beyond four weeks only if such a suspension were the only feasible means to reduce to a less than significant level potential effects on a significant archeological resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15064.5 (a)(c).

Archeological Testing Program. The archeological consultant shall prepare and submit to the ERO for review and approval an archeological testing plan (ATP). The archeological testing program shall be conducted in accordance with the approved ATP. The ATP shall identify the property types of the expected archeological resource(s) that potentially could be adversely affected by the proposed project, the testing method to be used, and the locations recommended for testing. The purpose of the archeological testing program will be to determine to the extent possible the presence or absence of archeological resources and to identify and to evaluate as *an historical resource* any archeological resource presumed to be within the site.

- At the completion of the archeological testing program, the archeological consultant shall submit a written report of the findings to the ERO. If based on the archeological testing program the archeological consultant finds that significant archeological resources may be present, the ERO in consultation with the archeological consultant shall determine if additional measures are warranted. Additional measures that may be undertaken include additional archeological testing, archeological monitoring, and/or an archeological data recovery program. If the ERO determines that a significant archeological resource were present and that the resource could be adversely affected by the proposed project, at the discretion of the project sponsor either:
 - A. The proposed project shall be re-designed so as to avoid any adverse effect on the significant archeological resource; or
 - B. A data recovery program shall be implemented, unless the ERO determines that the archeological resource is of greater interpretive than research significance and that interpretive use of the resource is feasible.

Archeological Monitoring Program. If the ERO in consultation with the archeological consultant determines that an archeological monitoring program shall be implemented the archeological monitoring program shall minimally include the following provisions:

- The archeological consultant, project sponsor, and ERO shall meet and consult on the scope of the AMP reasonably prior to any project-related soils disturbing activities commencing. The ERO in consultation with the archeological consultant shall determine what project activities shall be archeologically monitored. In most cases, any soils- disturbing activities, such as demolition, foundation removal, excavation, grading, utilities installation, foundation work, driving of piles (foundation, shoring, etc.), site remediation, etc., shall require archeological monitoring because of the risk these activities pose to potential archaeological resources and to their depositional context;
- The archeological consultant shall advise all project contractors to be on the alert for evidence of the presence of the expected resource(s), of how to identify the evidence of the expected resource(s), and of the appropriate protocol in the event of apparent discovery of an archeological resource;
- The archeological monitor(s) shall be present on the project site according to a schedule agreed upon by the archeological consultant and the ERO until the ERO has, in consultation with project archeological consultant, determined that project construction activities could have no effects on significant archeological deposits;
- The archeological monitor shall record and be authorized to collect soil samples and artifactual/ecofactual material as warranted for analysis;

If an intact archeological deposit is encountered, all soils-disturbing activities in the vicinity of the deposit shall cease. The archeological monitor shall be empowered to temporarily redirect demolition/excavation/pile driving/construction activities and equipment until the deposit is evaluated. If in the case of pile driving activity (foundation, shoring, etc.), the archeological monitor has cause to believe that the pile driving activity may affect an archeological resource, the pile driving activity shall be terminated until an appropriate evaluation of the resource has been made in consultation with the ERO. The archeological consultant shall immediately notify the ERO of the encountered archeological deposit. The archeological consultant shall make a reasonable effort to assess the identity, integrity, and significance of the encountered archeological deposit, and present the findings of this assessment to the ERO.

Whether or not significant archeological resources are encountered, the archeological consultant shall submit a written report of the findings of the monitoring program to the ERO.

Archeological Data Recovery Program. The archeological data recovery program shall be conducted in accord with an archeological data recovery plan (ADRP). The archeological consultant, project sponsor, and ERO shall meet and consult on the scope of the ADRP prior to preparation of a draft ADRP. The archeological consultant shall submit a draft ADRP to the ERO. The ADRP shall identify how the proposed data recovery program will preserve the significant information the archeological resource is expected to contain. That is, the ADRP will identify what scientific/historical research questions are applicable to the expected resource, what data classes the resource is expected to possess, and how the expected data classes would address the applicable research questions. Data recovery, in general, should be limited to the portions of the historical property that could be adversely affected by the proposed project. Destructive data recovery methods shall not be applied to portions of the archeological resources if nondestructive methods are practical.

The scope of the ADRP shall include the following elements:

- *Field Methods and Procedures.* Descriptions of proposed field strategies, procedures, and operations.
- *Cataloguing and Laboratory Analysis.* Description of selected cataloguing system and artifact analysis procedures.
- *Discard and Deaccession Policy.* Description of and rationale for field and post-field discard and deaccession policies.
- *Interpretive Program.* Consideration of an on-site/off-site public interpretive program during the course of the archeological data recovery program.
- *Security Measures.* Recommended security measures to protect the archeological resource from vandalism, looting, and non-intentionally damaging activities.
- *Final Report.* Description of proposed report format and distribution of results.

- *Curation.* Description of the procedures and recommendations for the curation of any recovered data having potential research value, identification of appropriate curation facilities, and a summary of the accession policies of the curation facilities.

Human Remains and Associated or Unassociated Funerary Objects. The treatment of human remains and of associated or unassociated funerary objects discovered during any soils disturbing activity shall comply with applicable State and Federal laws. This shall include immediate notification of the Coroner of the City and County of San Francisco and in the event of the Coroner's determination that the human remains are Native American remains, notification of the California State Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) who shall appoint a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) (Pub. Res. Code Sec. 5097.98). The archeological consultant, project sponsor, and MLD shall make all reasonable efforts to develop an agreement for the treatment of, with appropriate dignity, human remains and associated or unassociated funerary objects (CEQA Guidelines, Sec. 15064.5(d)). The agreement should take into consideration the appropriate excavation, removal, recordation, analysis, custodianship, curation, and final disposition of the human remains and associated or unassociated funerary objects.

Final Archeological Resources Report. The archeological consultant shall submit a Draft Final Archeological Resources Report (FARR) to the ERO that evaluates the historical significance of any discovered archeological resource and describes the archeological and historical research methods employed in the archeological testing/monitoring/data recovery program(s) undertaken. Information that may put at risk any archeological resource shall be provided in a separate removable insert within the final report.

Once approved by the ERO, copies of the FARR shall be distributed as follows: California Archaeological Site Survey Northwest Information Center (NWIC) shall receive one (1) copy and the ERO shall receive a copy of the transmittal of the FARR to the NWIC. The Major Environmental Analysis division of the Planning Department shall receive three copies of the FARR along with copies of any formal site recordation forms (CA DPR 523 series) and/or documentation for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places/California Register of Historical Resources. In instances of high public interest in or the high interpretive value of the resource, the ERO may require a different final report content, format, and distribution than that presented above.

IMPROVEMENT MEASURES

Improvement measures diminish effects of the project that were found through the environmental analysis to be less-than-significant impacts. The cost of the first, second and third measures would be borne by the project sponsor, and the fourth measure would be implemented by the Department of Parking and Traffic.

Wind

Installation of durable street trees that would mature to a large size along the Ninth Street sidewalk adjacent to the project site would noticeably reduce wind speeds that occur in

pedestrian areas. Street trees would reduce wind speeds but would not necessarily provide sufficient reductions to eliminate the two new exceedances of the pedestrian-comfort criterion or the two new exceedances of the wind hazard criterion generated by the proposed project.

Geology/Topography

The project sponsor shall incorporate the recommendations in the conclusions of the Geotechnical Investigation Report on the project site.

Noise

No construction activities would occur on Sundays from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM due to surrounding land uses.

Transportation

To improve operating conditions at the intersections of Mission/Ninth and Mission/Eighth during the weekday PM peak hour, the cycle lengths could be increased from 60 seconds to 90 seconds. Since other nearby intersections, including Mission/Tenth, already have 90 second cycles, the increase in cycle length would not substantially affect area circulation. With this change, the intersections of Mission/Ninth and Mission/Eighth would improve to LOS D and LOS C, respectively. These changes to the cycle length would be coordinated by the San Francisco Department of Parking and Traffic to ensure compatibility with traffic operations in the area.

E. SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS (page 111)

No significant project-specific impacts have been identified. With implementation of the mitigation measures outlined above, all potential significant impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

F. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT (page 113)

Alternative A: No Project

This alternative would entail no change to the site, which would remain in its existing condition. The No Project Alternative would not have any of the impacts of the proposed project, including the proposed project's wind effects: elimination of one pedestrian-comfort exceedance, creation of two new pedestrian-comfort exceedances, elimination of four wind hazard exceedances, creation of two new wind hazard exceedances, reduction in annual duration of hazard exceedances, and slight overall reduction in wind speeds.

Alternative B: Code-Compliant Alternative

This alternative, in compliance with the existing height restriction of the 120-X Height and Bulk District, would result in a project that would be 120 feet and approximately seven to eight stories high, with approximately 184,000 square feet of office use, and a two-level below-grade parking garage with about 94 spaces.

Compared to the proposed project, the Code-Compliant Alternative, because its smaller size, would have less intensive environmental effects on visual quality and urban design, transportation and parking, population, construction noise, air quality, shadows, utilities and public services, and energy/natural resources, although these impacts would be less than significant for both this alternative and the proposed project. Due to the chaotic wind conditions that exist in the project vicinity, it cannot be assumed that the smaller building in this alternative would have any effect on the pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances that would be generated by the proposed project; however, the duration of existing hazard exceedances could be affected by such changes. This alternative would have similar effects in those environmental areas not governed by height or bulk: land use, operation noise, biology, geology/topography, water, hazards, and cultural resources.

Alternative B would partially satisfy the project sponsor's objectives by providing a portion of the additional space that is projected to be needed for growth and consolidation of its operations.

Alternative B would be the environmentally superior alternative.

G. AREAS OF CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

This Environmental Impact Report focuses on the issues of visual quality, shadow, wind, and transportation. All other potential environmental effects were found to be at a less-than-significant level or to be mitigated to a level of less-than-significance with mitigation measures agreed to by the project sponsor. Please see the Initial Study, included in this document as Appendix A, for analysis of issues other than land use, visual quality, shadow, wind, transportation and growth inducement.

I. SUMMARY

Comments were received during the scoping process on the proposed project relating to possible alternative uses for the site; setback and access, including access to the existing building to the south; potential impacts on existing trees, open space, rodent levels, noise levels during construction and operation, parking, wind, seismic safety; cumulative impacts; and potential impacts on the homeless. These areas may be considered by some members of the public to be controversial and may need to be resolved.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project sponsor, the State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF), proposes to expand their San Francisco office at 1275 Market Street by constructing an adjacent 12-story, approximately 268,000 gross square foot office building at 55 Ninth Street.

A. PROJECT SPONSOR'S OBJECTIVES

The project sponsor has the following objectives for the proposed project:

- Provide adequate space for the State Compensation Insurance Fund's operations.
- Improve efficiency by consolidating operations that are currently dispersed in several locations throughout San Francisco.
- Complete the project on schedule and within budget.
- Develop a design that is complementary to the Mid-Market neighborhood and the existing adjacent SCIF office building at 1275 Market Street.

B. PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed project site, located at 55 Ninth Street, is in the block bounded by Market, Ninth, Mission, and Eighth Streets in the Mid-Market neighborhood, and is located mid-block on the northeast side of Ninth Street (Figure 1, Project Location, page 20).

The project site is on Assessor's Block 3701, Lot 63. The essentially flat site is irregular in shape but approximates a square, and measures approximately 35,800 square feet in area. It is about 175 feet long on the Ninth Street frontage, about 192 feet deep on the southeast property line, and 219 feet deep on the northwest property line. The site is occupied by a surface parking lot with about 173 parking spaces. The existing 1275 Market Street SCIF building occupies the adjacent Lot 64 and contains approximately 325,000 gross square feet of office space.

The project site is located in the C-3-G (Downtown General Commercial) Zoning District. The San Francisco *Planning Code* Section 210.3 describes the C-3-G District as follows:



Source: During Associates

REGIONAL LOCATION FIGURE 1

“This district covers the western portions of downtown and is composed of a variety of uses: Retail, offices, hotels, entertainment, clubs and institutions, and high-density residential. Many of these uses have a citywide or regional function, although the intensity of development is lower here than in the downtown core area. As in the case of other downtown districts, no off-street parking is required for individual commercial buildings, but in portions of this district automobile parking is a major land use, serving this district and the adjacent office and retail core areas. In the vicinity of Market Street, the configuration of this district reflects easy accessibility by rapid transit.”

The project site is located in a 120-X Height and Bulk District.

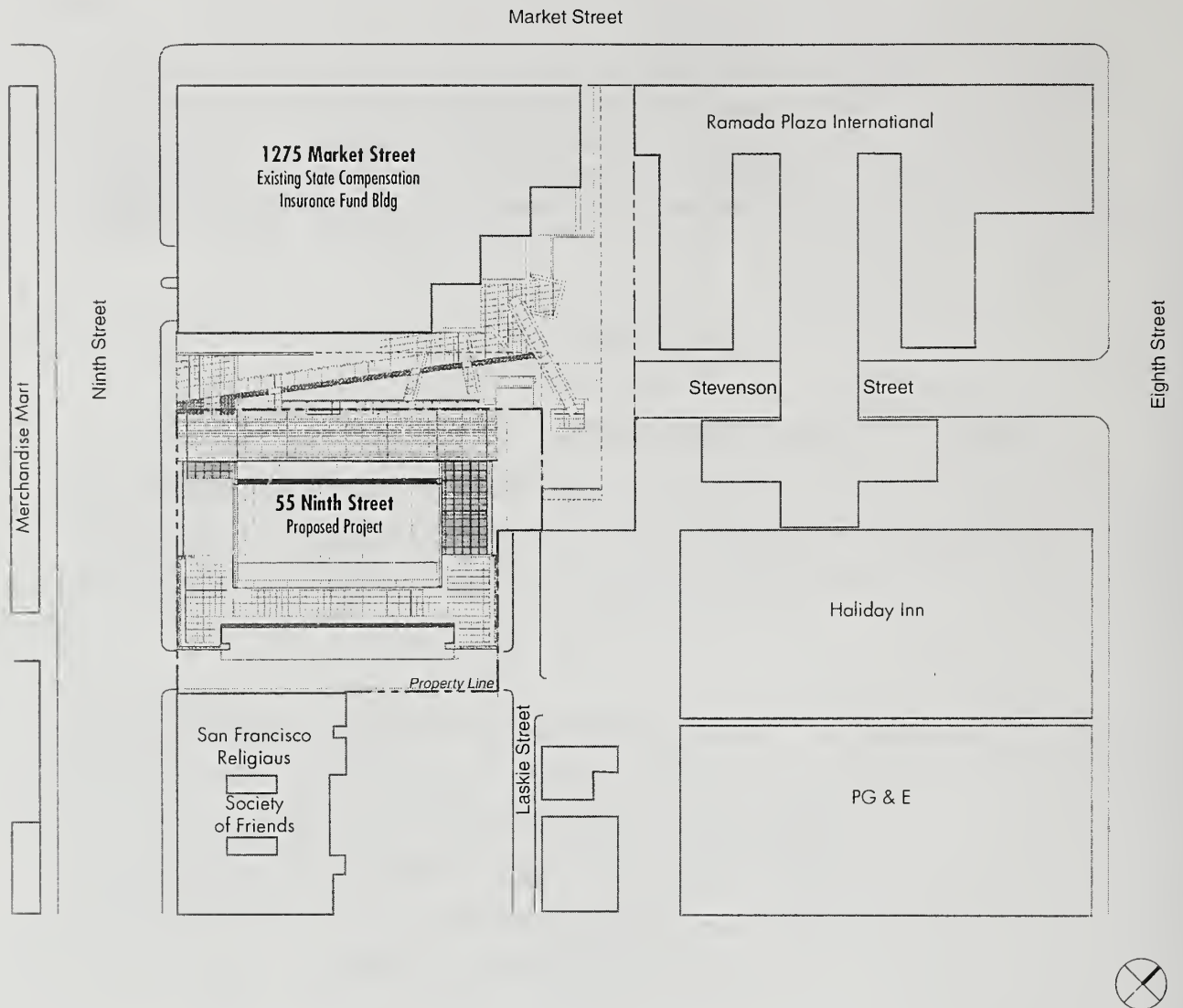
C. PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The new building would be approximately 159 feet high, plus a 39-foot mechanical penthouse, and would contain about 268,000 gross square feet of office space and a two-level below-grade parking garage with about 134 spaces (93 self-park and 41 tandem), as shown in Figures 2 through 10, pages 22 to 30.

The proposed building would be connected to the existing adjacent State Compensation Insurance Fund office building (occupying Lot 64) by a pedestrian bridge located on the second floor and a pedestrian/service tunnel connection below the second level of the parking garage. These connections would allow for movement of supplies and would be accessible by freight elevator. The proposed steel frame building would feature glass curtain walls with the southeast and southwest corners constructed of natural stone material to echo the facade of the 1275 Market Street building.

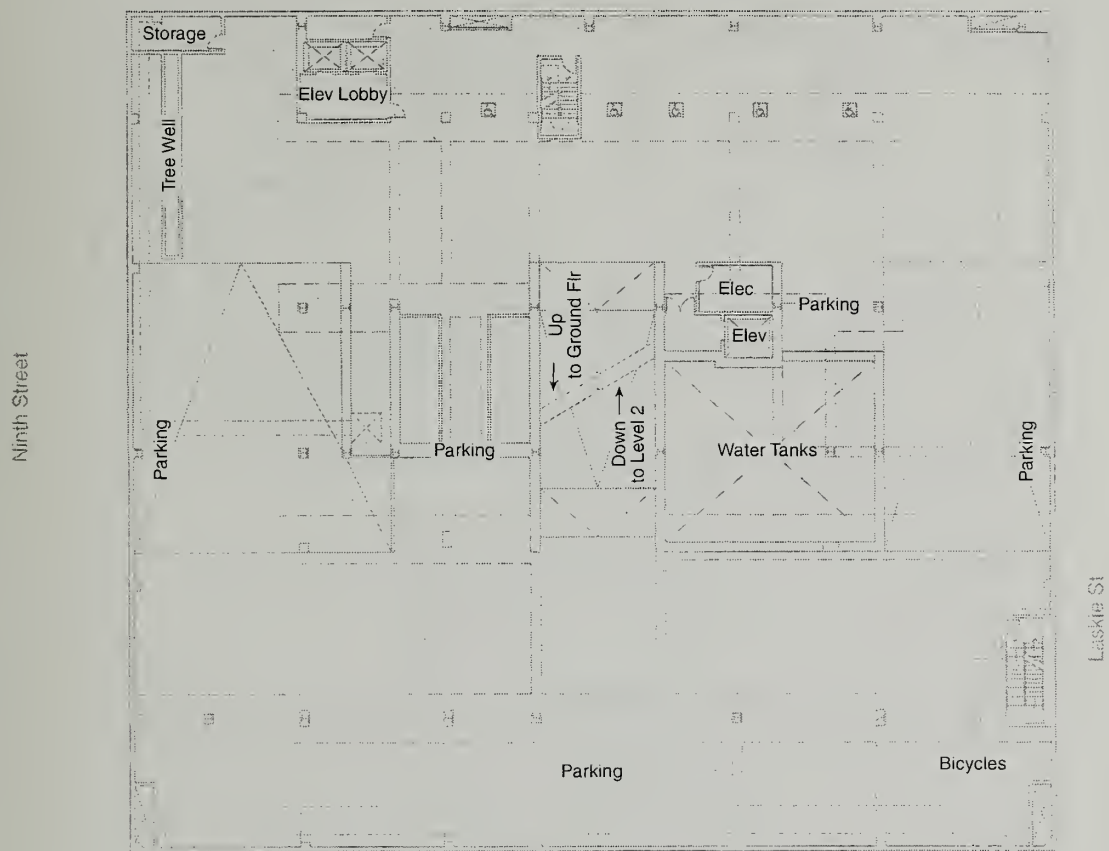
The proposed project would provide approximately 25,392 square feet of exterior, landscaped open space, available to the public, that would be shared between the proposed new building and the existing 1275 Market Street building.

The entrance to the new building and access to off-street parking and loading would be from Ninth Street. There would be four loading bays and a trash compactor on the ground level in the center of the building. Trucks would enter and exit on Ninth Street and could also exit on Laskie Street, which connects with Mission Street.



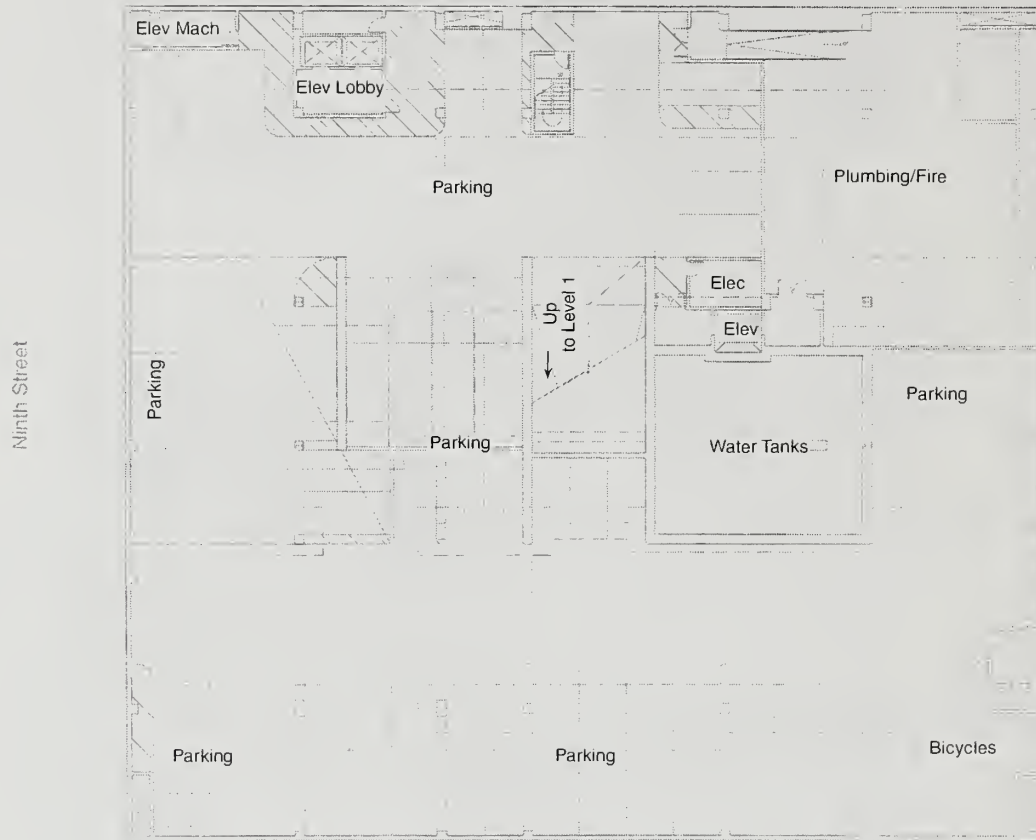
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

SITE PLAN FIGURE 2



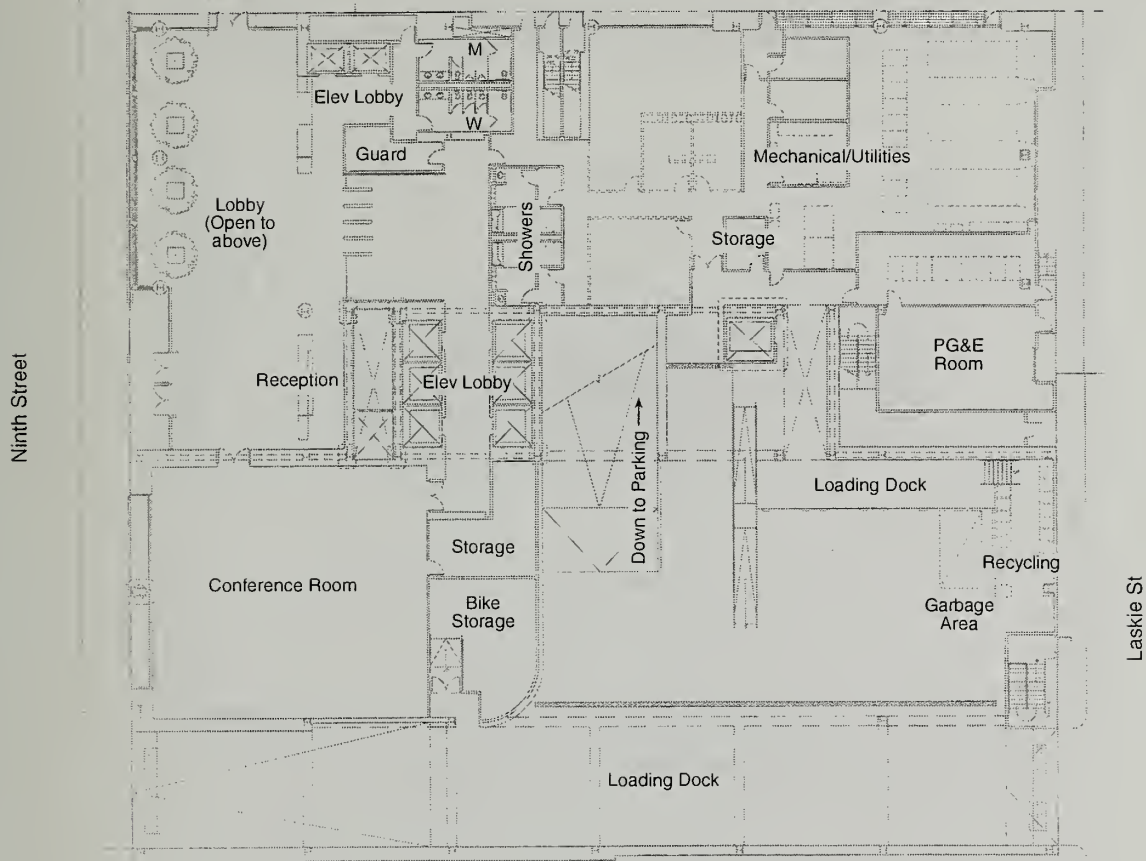
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN—LEVEL 1 **FIGURE 3**



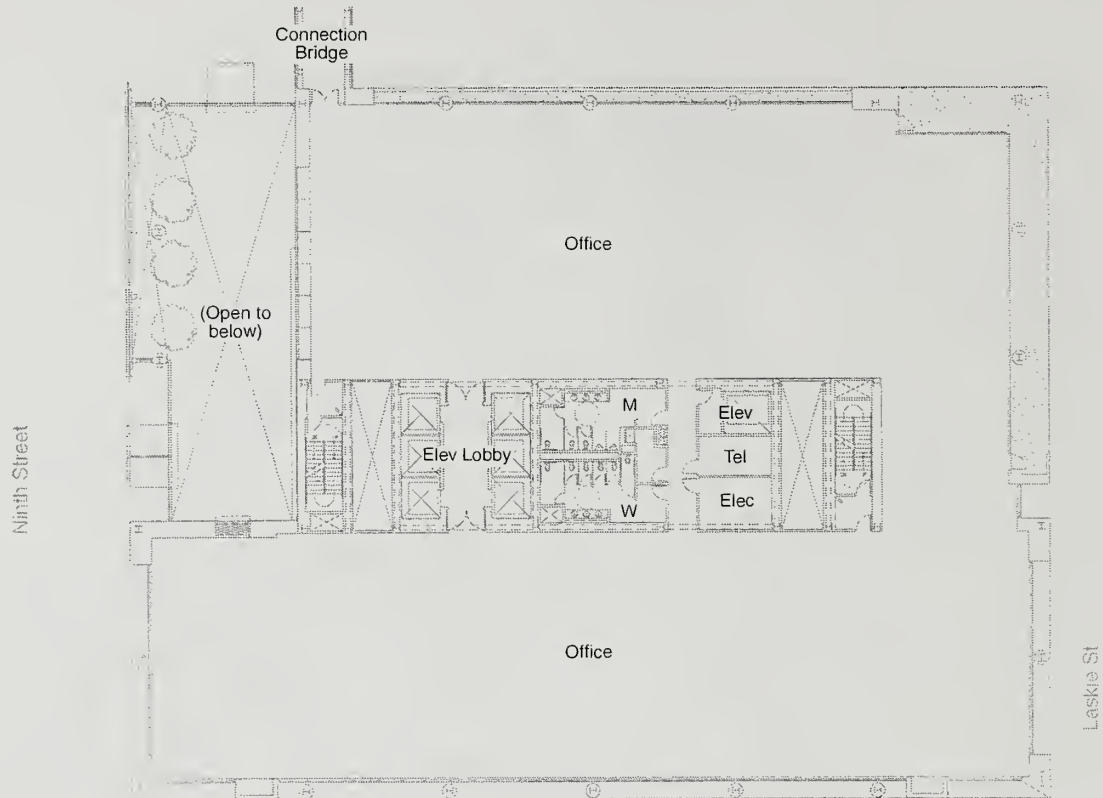
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN—LEVEL 2 **FIGURE 4**



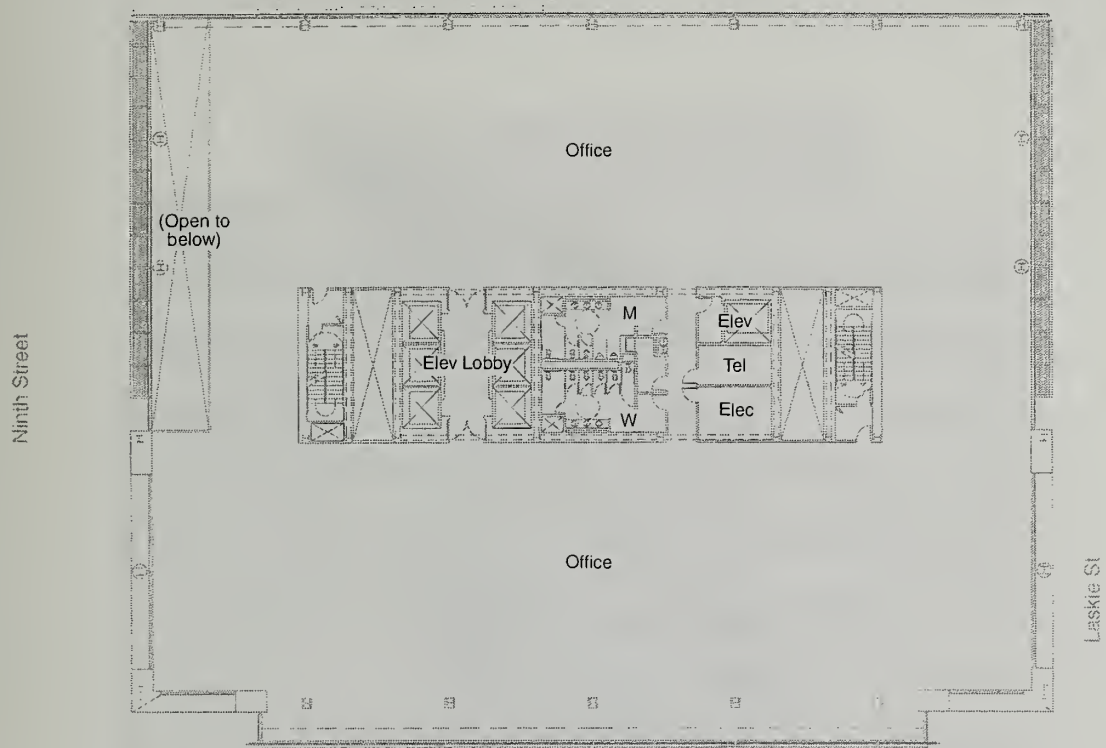
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

GROUND FLOOR PLAN FIGURE 5



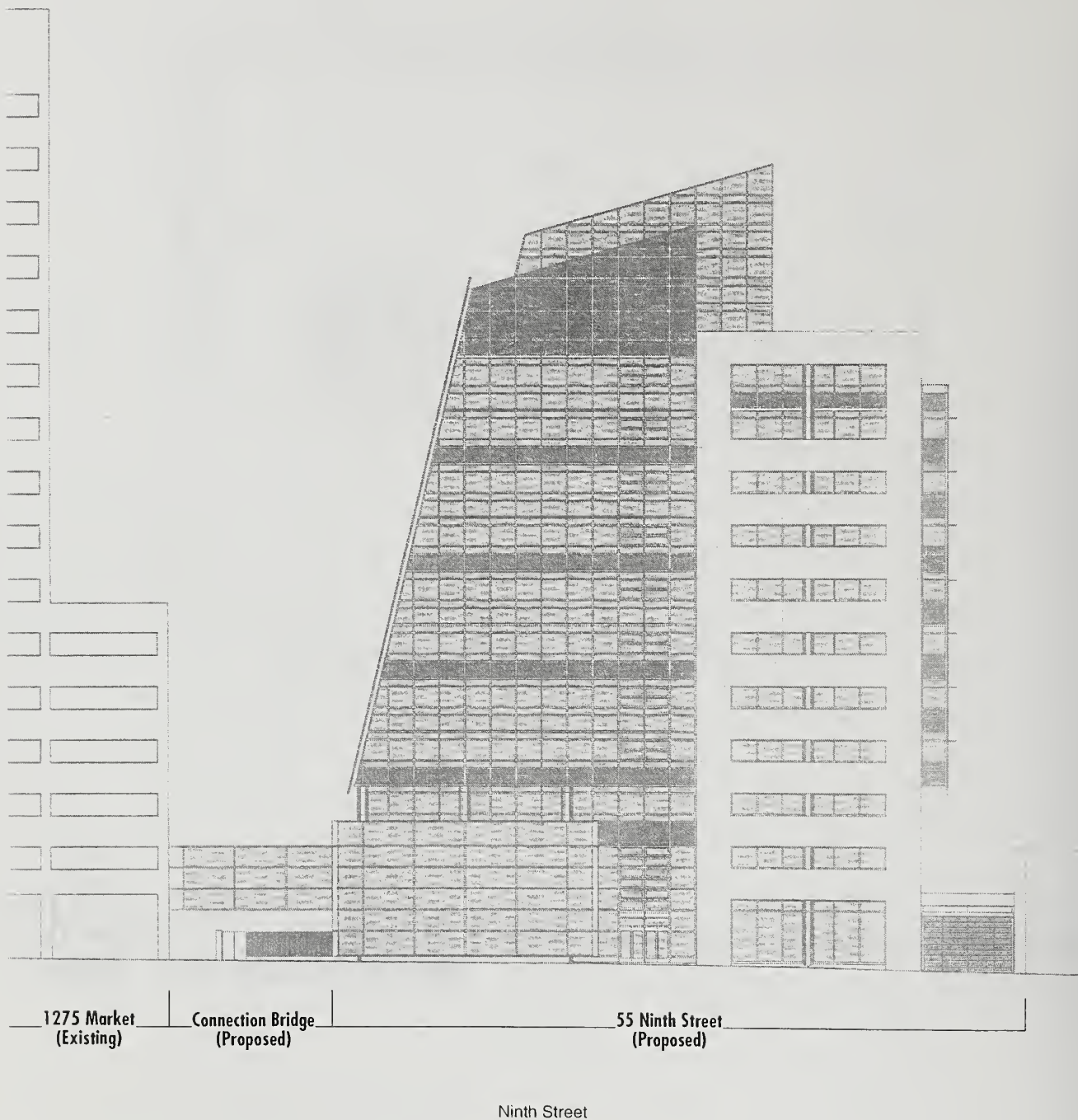
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

SECOND FLOOR PLAN **FIGURE 6**



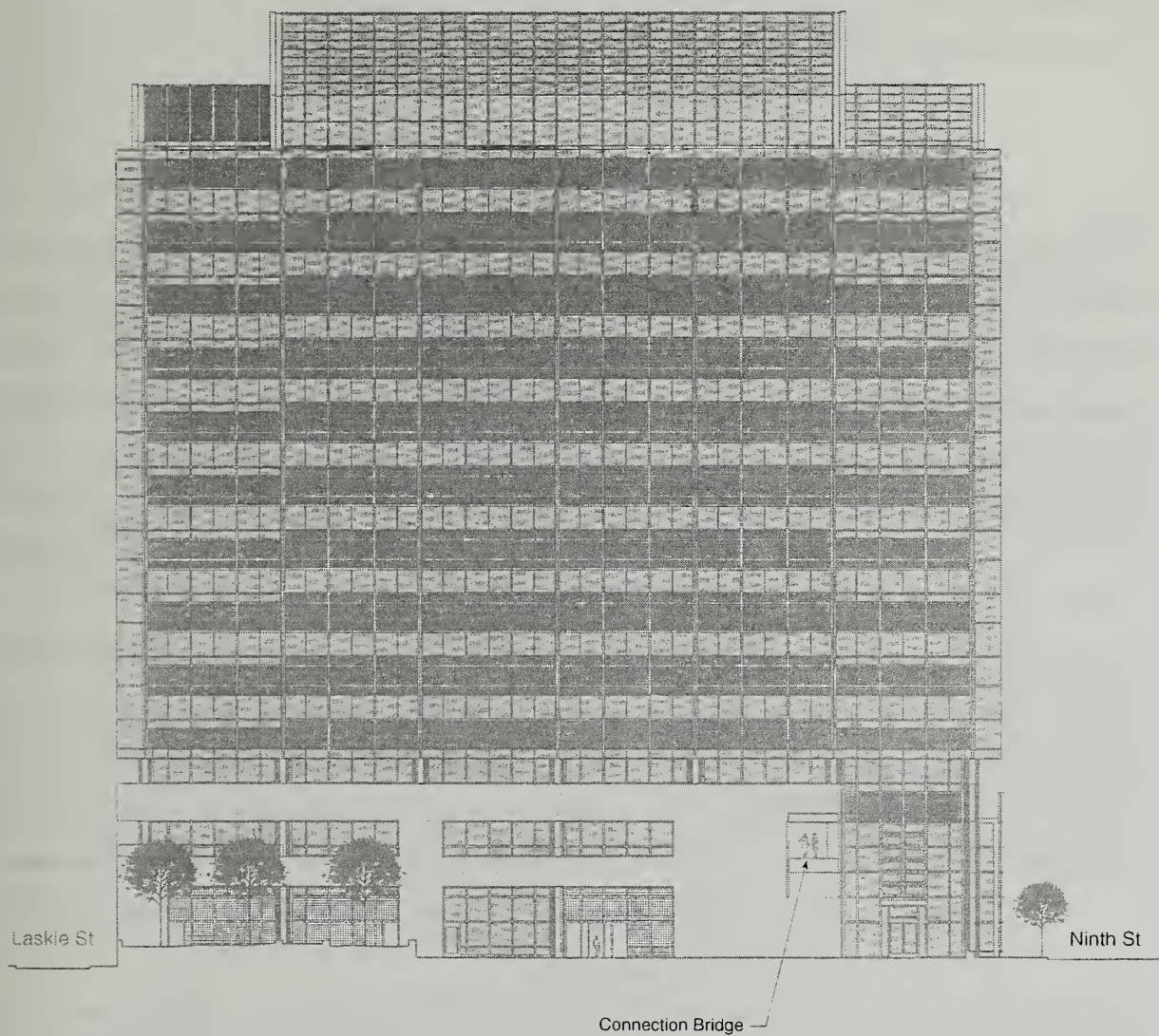
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

TYPICAL UPPER FLOOR PLAN FIGURE 7



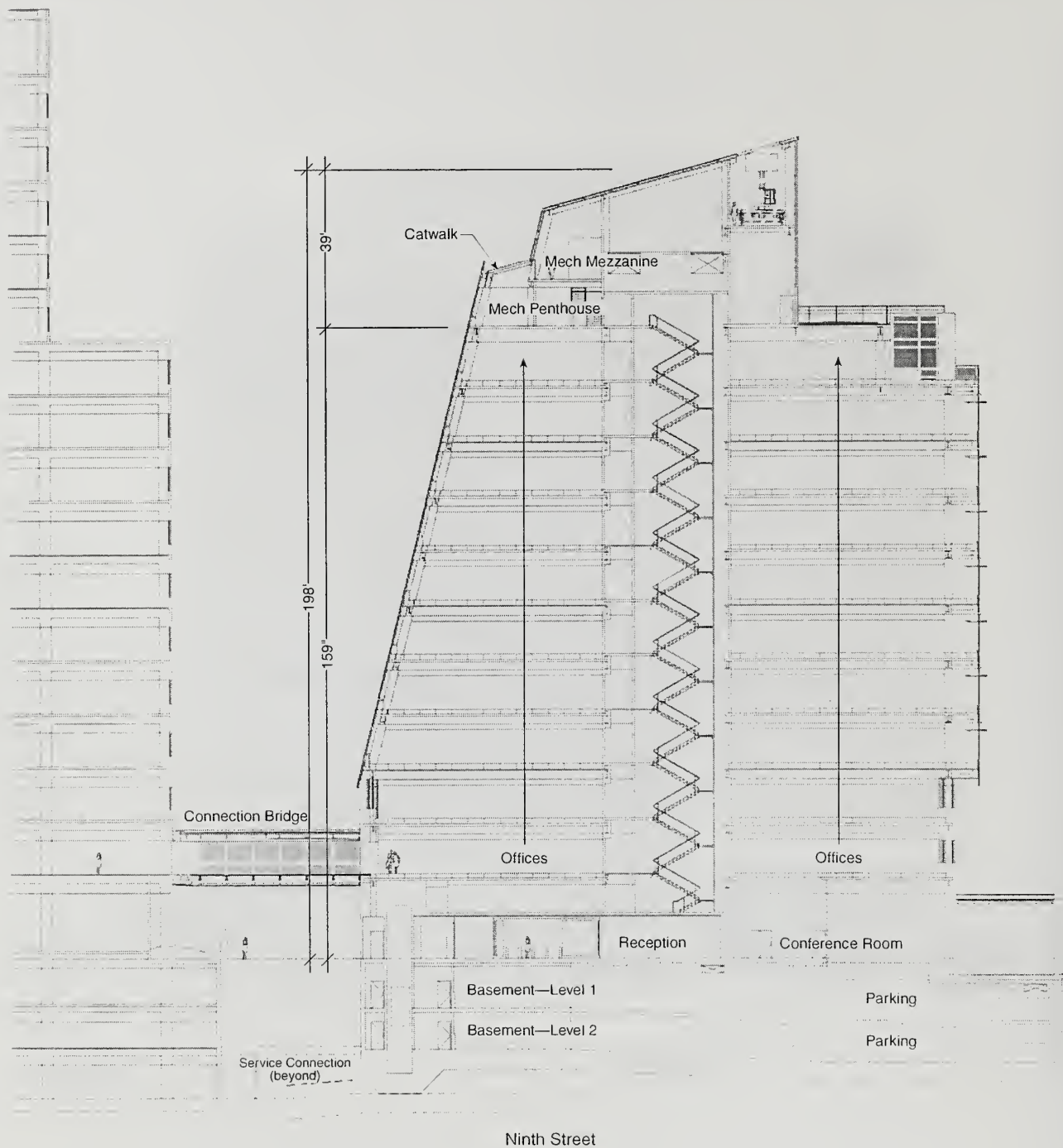
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

WEST ELEVATION (VIEW FROM NINTH STREET) FIGURE 8



Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

NORTH ELEVATION (VIEW FROM 1275 MARKET) FIGURE 9



Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

NORTH-SOUTH SECTION **FIGURE 10**

The project calls for the excavation of approximately 37,000 cubic yards of soil, to a depth of about 32 feet.

Project construction would take about 92 weeks (approximately 22 months). The project construction cost is estimated at \$75 million. The project sponsor is the California State Compensation Insurance Fund, and the project architect is Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum, Inc.

D. PROJECT APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS

This EIR will undergo a public comment period as noted on the cover, including a public hearing before the Planning Commission on the Draft EIR. Following the public comment period, responses to written and oral comments will be prepared and published in a Draft Comments and Responses document and presented to the Planning Commission as a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for certification as to accuracy, objectivity, and completeness. No approvals or permits may be issued before the FEIR is certified by the Planning Commission. The FEIR certified by the Planning Commission is appealable to the Board of Supervisors.

The *Planning Code*, which incorporates by reference the City's Zoning Maps, governs permitted uses, densities, and the maximum allowable building envelope of buildings within San Francisco. Permits to construct new buildings (or to alter or demolish existing ones) may not be issued unless either the proposed project conforms to the *Code*, or an exception is granted pursuant to provisions of the *Code*. The proposed project would require approval of demolition and building permits from the Department of Building Inspection. No building permit or demolition permit application has been filed.

The proposed project would require authorization by the San Francisco Planning Commission pursuant to *Planning Code* Section 309 (Permit Review in a C-3 District). Section 309 of the *Planning Code*, Permit Review in C-3 Districts, governs the review of project authorization and building and site permit applications in C-3 Districts. Section 309 also permits the imposition of certain conditions in regard to such matters as a project's siting and design, view, parking, traffic and transit effects, energy consumption, pedestrian environment, and other matters. Section 309 requires that the Zoning Administrator determine that the project complies with *Planning Code* Section 138 (Open Space), Section 139 (Downtown Park Fund), Section 146 (Shadows on Streets), Section 147 (Shadows on

Publicly Accessible Open Spaces), Section 148 (Ground-Level Wind Currents), Section 149 (Public Art), Section 102.8(b)(16) (Replacement of Short-term Parking), Section 313 (Office Affordable Housing Production Program), and Section 314 (Child Care). The project would require exception to the wind comfort criterion of *Code* Section 148(a) and Planning Commission authorization for replacement parking.

As an office project, the project would also be subject to *Planning Code* Section 321 - Office Development: Annual Limit, which limits the total amount of office space that can be approved in San Francisco each year, subject to certain conditions and exceptions.

The proposed project would require amendments to the Height and Bulk designations of the site, pursuant to Section 302 of the *Planning Code*. The proposed change in the Height and Bulk District is from 120-X to 200-S. The 200-S Height and Bulk District permits buildings up to a height of 200 feet plus mechanical penthouses. (The existing 120-X Height and Bulk District permits buildings up to a height of 120 feet.) As a result of these changes for the height and bulk district, the project would also require an amendment to map 5 of the Downtown Area Plan of the San Francisco *General Plan*, and an amendment to zoning map 1H of the Planning Code, corresponding to these changes in height and bulk.

In the 200-S Height and Bulk District, there are no length or diagonal dimension limitations applicable to the base (the lowest portion of the building extending vertically to a street wall height up to 1.25 times the width of the widest abutting street or 50 feet, whichever is more). The building base shall be delineated from the lower and upper tower and related to abutting buildings by a setback, cornice line or equivalent projection or other appropriate means. Above the base, buildings up to 160 feet in height may have a maximum length of 160 feet, a maximum floor size of 20,000 square feet, and a maximum diagonal dimension of 190 feet. Upper tower bulk controls, applying to portions of buildings taller than 160 feet, are: a maximum length of 130 feet; a maximum average floor size of 12,000 square feet; a maximum floor size for any floor of 17,000 square feet; and a maximum average diagonal measure of 160 feet. The proposed project would require an exception to these bulk requirements.

The proposed project would require approval from the San Francisco Department of Public Works of a merger of Lot 63 (the proposed construction site) and Lot 64 (containing the existing 1275 Market Street SCIF building).

Environmental plans and policies, like the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's *1997 Clean Air Plan*, directly address physical environmental issues and/or contain standards or targets that must be met in order to preserve or improve specific components of the City's physical environment. The proposed project would not obviously or substantially conflict with any such adopted environmental plan or policy.

On November 4, 1986, the voters of San Francisco approved Proposition M, the Accountable Planning Initiative, which added Section 101.1 to the *Planning Code* and established eight Priority Policies. These policies are: preservation and enhancement of neighborhood serving retail uses; protection of neighborhood character; preservation and enhancement of affordable housing; discouragement of commuter automobiles; protection of industrial and service sectors from commercial office development; enhancement of resident employment and business ownership; maximization of earthquake preparedness; landmark and historic building preservation; and protection of open space. Prior to issuing a permit for any project that requires an Initial Study under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), or adopting any zoning ordinance or development agreement, the City is required to find that the proposed project or legislation is consistent with the Priority Policies. The case report and approval motions for the proposed project will contain the analysis determining whether the proposed project is consistent with the Priority Policies.

The *San Francisco General Plan*, which provides general policies and objectives to guide land use decisions, contains some policies that relate to physical environmental issues. In general, potential conflicts with the *General Plan* are considered by the decision-makers (normally the Planning Commission) independently of the environmental review process, as part of the decision to approve, modify or disapprove a proposed project. Any potential conflict not identified here could be considered in that context, and would not alter the physical environmental effects of the proposed project. See the Land Use section, Chapter III.A, for a discussion of some of the relevant *General Plan* objectives and policies.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND IMPACTS

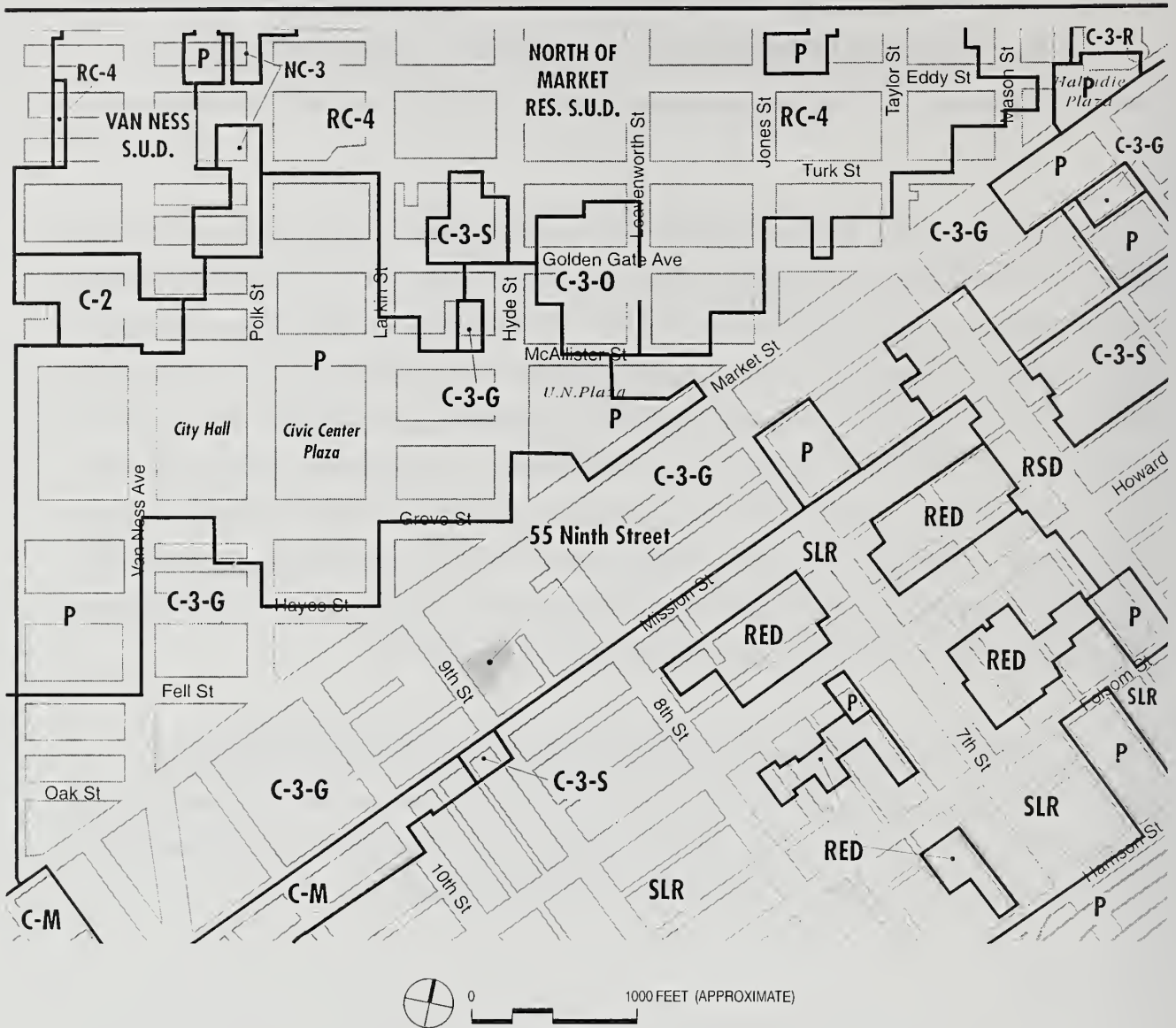
An application for environmental evaluation for the proposed project was filed October 25, 2001. On the basis of an Initial Study published on November 30, 2002, the Planning Department determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was required. The Initial Study determined that the following effects of the proposed project would either be insignificant or would be reduced to a less-than-significant level by mitigation measures included in the proposed project and thus required no further analysis: land use; population; noise; air quality; utilities/public services; biology; geology/topography; water; energy/natural resources; hazards; and cultural resources (see Appendix A, page A-1, for the Initial Study). Therefore, the EIR does not discuss these issues. The proposed project's potentially significant impacts in the areas of visual quality; shadows; wind; and transportation are assessed in this chapter. Land use is also discussed in the EIR for informational purposes.

A. LAND USE, ZONING, AND GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

The Initial Study concluded that the proposed project would not have significant adverse land use impacts (for further information, see Appendix A, page A-1). The land use information below is included in the EIR for informational purposes and to orient the reader.

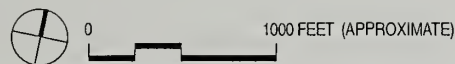
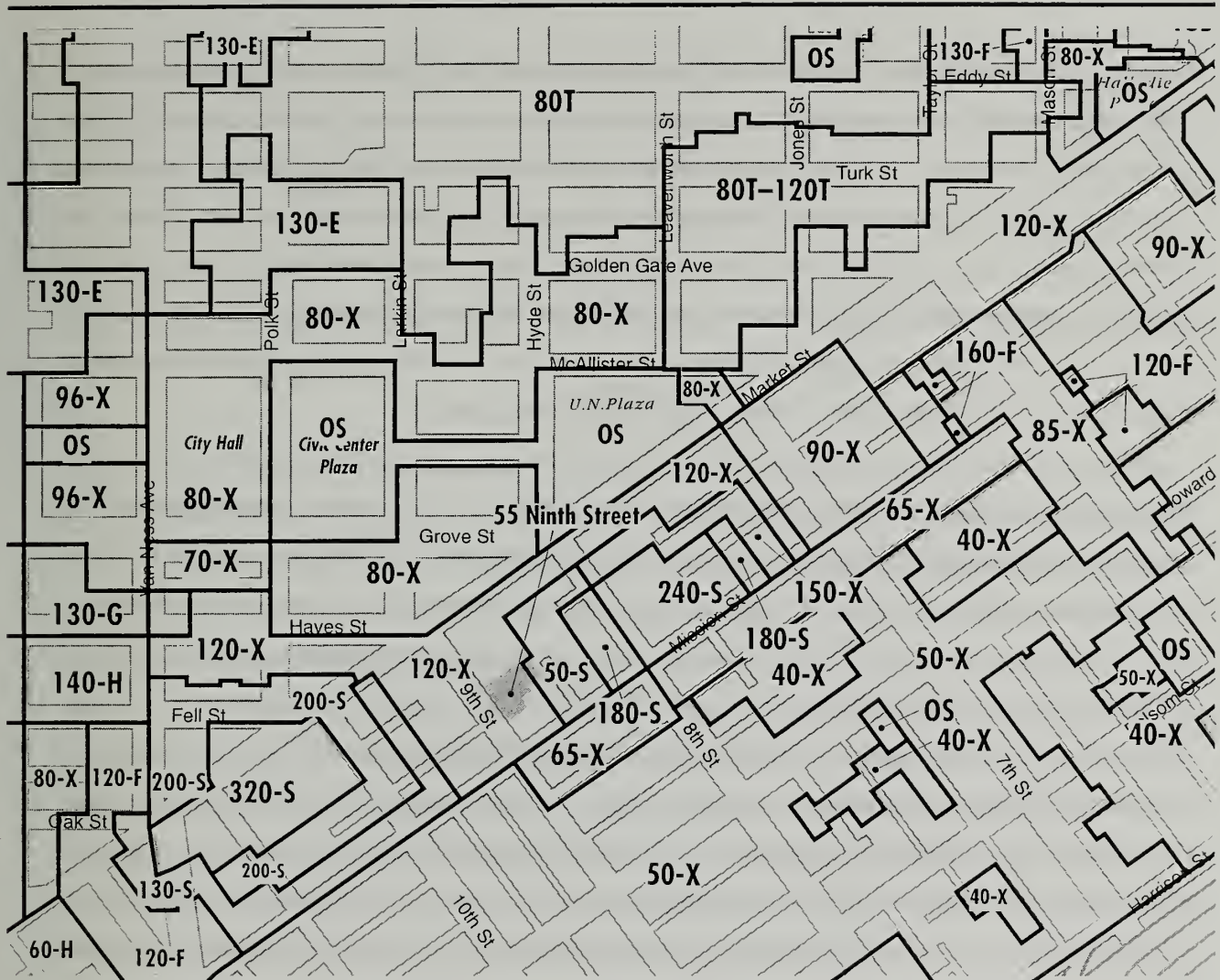
LAND USE

The project site is within the C-3-G (Downtown General Commercial) Zoning District (see Figures 11 and 12, Existing Zoning Districts and Existing Height Districts, pages 36 and 37). Zoning districts in the surrounding area include C-M (Heavy Commercial), C-3-S (Downtown Support District), SLI (Service/Light Industrial District), M-1 (Light Industrial), M-2 (Heavy Industrial), P (Public Use), NC-3 (Moderate-Scale Neighborhood Commercial District), RH-3 (Residential, House, Three-Family), RC-4 (Residential-Commercial Combined District, High-Density), RED (Residential Enclave Districts), and SLR (Service/Light Industrial/Residential District). The proposed project is in a 120-X Height and Bulk District.



Source: San Francisco City Planning Department

EXISTING ZONING DISTRICTS IN THE PROJECT VICINITY **FIGURE 11**



LEGEND

- Height and Bulk boundary
- OS** Open Space district
- Numbers are height limits in feet
- 40-X** Letters refer to bulk limits in City Planning code Section 270

Source: San Francisco City Planning Department

EXISTING HEIGHT AND BULK DISTRICTS IN THE PROJECT VICINITY FIGURE 12

Section 210.3 of the San Francisco *Planning Code* describes the C-3-G District in the following manner: “This district covers the western portions of downtown and is composed of a variety of uses: Retail, offices, hotels, entertainment, clubs and institutions, and high-density residential. Many of these uses have a citywide or regional function, although the intensity of development is lower here than in the downtown core area. As in the case of other downtown districts, no off-street parking is required for individual commercial buildings, but in portions of this district automobile parking is a major land use, serving this district and the adjacent office and retail core areas. In the vicinity of Market Street, the configuration of this district reflects easy accessibility by rapid transit.”

Section 309 of the San Francisco *Planning Code*, Permit Review in C-3 Districts, governs the review of project authorization and building and site permit applications in C-3 Districts. Section 309 also permits the imposition of certain conditions in regard to such matters as a project's siting and design, view, parking, traffic and transit effects, energy consumption, pedestrian environment, and other matters. Section 309 requires that the Zoning Administrator determine that the project complies with *Planning Code* Section 138 (Open Space), Section 139 (Downtown Park Fund), Section 146 (Shadows on Streets), Section 147 (Shadows on Publicly Accessible Open Spaces), Section 148 (Ground-Level Wind Currents), Section 149 (Public Art), Section 102.8(b)(16) (Replacement of Short-term Parking), Section 313 (Office Affordable Housing Production Program), and Section 314 (Child Care). As an office project, the project would also be subject to *Planning Code* Section 321 - Office Development: Annual Limit.

The proposed project is in the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency's Mid-Market Redevelopment Project Area (see Plans, below, for more detail).

The project site is in the Mid-Market neighborhood, just southeast of the Civic Center. The portion of Market Street near the site is occupied by low-, mid-, and high-rise buildings with uses including residential, hotel, retail, commercial, institutional, restaurant, and government offices. These buildings were constructed at various times during the twentieth century. Most buildings are one to five stories in height; taller buildings include the eight-story Ramada Hotel on the southeast side of Market Street to the northeast of the existing State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF) headquarters, the historic 11-story San Francisco Merchandise Mart building on the southeast side of Market Street between Ninth

and Tenth Streets (facing the project site from the opposite side of Ninth Street), the 30-story residential/commercial/office Fox Plaza tower located in the triangular block bounded by Polk, Hayes, and Market Streets west of the project site, and the existing 17-story SCIF headquarters at 1275 Market Street on the corner of Ninth Street (northwest of the proposed construction site).

The two-story San Francisco Religious Society of Friends building on Ninth Street is adjacent to the project site to the southeast.

To the west, north, and northeast of the project site is the Civic Center, with a mixture of surface parking lots and buildings of various ages occupied by office, commercial, residential, restaurant, public, and cultural facilities. Building heights vary from one to 30 stories, including several high-rise buildings of 20 to 30 stories in height, a number of older low-rise buildings of one to four stories, and several intermediate-sized buildings of six to 17 stories.

Ninth Street between Market and Mission Streets, which includes the project site, has a mixture of surface parking and buildings constructed at various times during the twentieth century, ranging in height from one to eleven stories, and occupied by retail, hotel, restaurant, bar, residential, office, and institutional uses. Further to the south and southeast, buildings on Ninth Street range from one to four stories in height, and are occupied by a variety of retail and commercial uses.

While the proposed project would increase the density of use, number of employees, and amount of vehicles to the site, it would not essentially change the existing mixed-use character or physical arrangement of the area. The proposed office use would be generally compatible with the existing variety of uses in a dense urban area.

PLANS

The project site is within or near the site of two major planning efforts that are currently underway. The project site is located in the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency's (SFRA) Mid-Market Redevelopment Project Area for the proposed Mid-Market Redevelopment Plan and Mid-Market

Redevelopment Special Use District.¹ The Mid-Market Redevelopment Project Area is located in downtown San Francisco, generally from Fifth Street to Tenth Street along the Market and Mission Streets corridor. The project site was identified as a “Potential Development Opportunity Site” in the SFRA’s proposed Mid-Market Redevelopment Plan. The Mid-Market Plan would provide for mixed-use development on most opportunity sites. Implementation of the Mid-Market Plan would intensify activities and residential and employee population in the project area and would not introduce any new land uses to the area.

In addition, the project site is approximately one-half block north of the South of Market Neighborhood, one of San Francisco’s Eastern Neighborhoods that are the subject of a community planning process under the direction of the San Francisco Planning Department.

These efforts, under the direction of the Planning Department and Redevelopment Agency, could lead to land-use changes in these areas in the future. Where land use changes are reasonably foreseeable they are incorporated into the evaluation of the cumulative impacts for the project.

The General Plan and Downtown Plan

The project site is within the part of San Francisco covered by the Downtown Plan, an Area Plan of the *San Francisco General Plan*. The proposed project would intensify use of the site in a manner generally consistent with the Downtown Plan, although the proposed project would require a change in the height and bulk designation of the site from 120-X to 200-S, and exception to the 200-S bulk requirements, as discussed in II. Project Description, D. Project Approval Requirements. The project would also require an amendment to map 5 of the Downtown Area Plan of the *San Francisco General Plan* corresponding to these changes in height and bulk.

The Downtown Plan is the policy document that guides most growth and development in San Francisco’s downtown. Centered on Market Street, the plan covers an area roughly bounded by Van Ness Avenue on the west, The Embarcadero on the east, Folsom Street on the south, and Washington

¹ San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and City and County of San Francisco Planning Department, *Mid-Market Redevelopment Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report*, Case No. 2002.0805E, published September 28, 2002.

Street on the north. The plan contains a number of objectives and policies that address the following issues: provision of space for commerce, retail, housing, and open space; preservation of the past; urban form; movement to, from, and within the downtown area; and seismic safety.

Some key objectives and policies of the *General Plan* relevant to the proposed project are noted here; others may be addressed during consideration of project approval.

Downtown Plan Objectives and Policies

- Objective 2, to “maintain and improve San Francisco’s position as a prime location for financial, administrative, corporate and professional activity.”
- Objective 6, to “provide space for future office, retail, hotel service and related uses within acceptable levels of density in downtown San Francisco.”
- Objective 13, Policy 4, to “relate the height of buildings to important attributes of the City pattern and to the height and character of existing and proposed development.”
- Objective 15, Policy 1, to “ensure the new facades relate harmoniously with nearby facade patterns.”
- Objective 16, Policy 4, to “use designs and materials and include activities at the ground floor to create pedestrian interest.”

Commerce and Industry Element

- Objective 1, Policy 1, to “encourage development which provides substantial net benefits and minimizes undesirable consequences. Discourage development which has substantial undesirable consequences that cannot be mitigated.”
- Objective 3, to “provide expanded employment opportunities for City residents, particularly the unemployed and economically disadvantaged.”

Urban Design Element

- Objective 3, Policy 1, to “promote harmony in the visual relationships and transitions between new and older buildings.”
- Policy 2, to “avoid extreme contrasts in color, shape and other characteristics which will cause new buildings to stand out in excess of their public importance.”

- Policy 5, to “relate the height of buildings to important attributes of the city pattern and to the height and character of existing development.”
- Policy 6, to “relate the bulk of buildings to the prevailing scale of development to avoid an overwhelming or dominating appearance in new construction.”

Environmental Protection Element

- Objective 1, Policy 4, to “assure that all new development meets strict environmental quality standards and recognizes human needs.”
- Objective 14, to “promote effective energy management practices to maintain the economic vitality of commerce and industry.”
- Objective 14, Policy 1, to “increase the energy efficiency of existing commercial and industrial buildings through cost-effective energy management measures.”

Transportation Element

- Policy 30.1, to “assure that new or enlarged parking facilities meet need, locational and design criteria.”
- Policy 40.1, to “provide off-street facilities for freight loading and service vehicles on the site of new buildings sufficient to meet the demands generated by the intended uses. Seek opportunities to create new off-street loading facilities for existing buildings.”

ZONING

The project site is located in the C-3-G (Downtown General Commercial) Zoning District in San Francisco and a 120-X Height and Bulk District, where heights up to 120 feet may be permitted. The Floor Area Ratio is 6:1. The proposed project would require amendments to the Height and Bulk designations of the site, pursuant to Section 302 of the *Planning Code*. The proposed change in the Height and Bulk District is from 120-X to 200-S. The 200-S Height and Bulk District permits buildings up to a height of 200 feet plus mechanical penthouses. The proposed project would also require an amendment to zoning map 7H of the *Planning Code*.

In the 200-S Height and Bulk District, there are no length or diagonal dimension limitations applicable to the base (the lowest portion of the building extending vertically to a street wall height up to 1.25 times the width of the widest abutting street or 50 feet, whichever is more). The building base shall be

delineated from the lower and upper tower and related to abutting buildings by a setback, cornice line or equivalent projection or other appropriate means. Above the base, buildings up to 160 feet in height may have a maximum length of 160 feet, a maximum floor size of 20,000 square feet, and a maximum diagonal dimension of 190 feet. Upper tower bulk controls, applying to portions of buildings taller than 160 feet, are: a maximum length of 130 feet; a maximum average floor size of 12,000 square feet; a maximum floor size for any floor of 17,000 square feet; and a maximum average diagonal measure of 160 feet. The proposed project would require an exception to these bulk units.

B. VISUAL QUALITY AND URBAN DESIGN

This section first describes the visual character of the Mid-Market and Civic Center neighborhoods and the immediate vicinity of the project site. This is followed by a discussion of the project's visual compatibility with its surroundings.

Photographic views from two locations have been prepared to illustrate existing conditions in the project vicinity and at the project site (see Figures 13 and 14, pages 44 and 45). For each location, a visual simulation of the proposed project has been prepared for comparison.

Existing Visual Quality and Urban Form

MID-MARKET AND CIVIC CENTER NEIGHBORHOODS

Visual quality in an urban setting is comprised of elements such as building scale, height, architectural features and materials, patterns of buildings along street frontages, and views of public open space or plazas or of more distant landscape features such as hills, the Bay, or built landmarks such as bridges. These elements help define the sense of place in an urban context. In general, positive urban design character in San Francisco, as reflected in *General Plan* policies, encourages “street walls” of buildings fronting on sidewalks, maintaining buildings of architectural character, moderating scale of new development to relate to existing, older buildings, and protection of important views of open space or landmarks.

Existing SCIF Building

Merchandise Mart

Existing View



Existing SCIF Building

Proposed Project

Merchandise Mart

View with Project



Source: Square One Productions

VIEW LOOKING SOUTH ON NINTH STREET FIGURE 13

Merchandise
Mart

Existing SCIF Building

Existing View



Merchandise
Mart

Existing SCIF Building
Proposed Project

View with Project



Source: Square One Productions

VIEW LOOKING NORTH ON NINTH STREET FIGURE 14

The Mid-Market neighborhood of San Francisco, site of the proposed project, is characterized by a variety of building heights, ages, forms, and styles. Uses are also varied, and include residential, hotel, retail, commercial, institutional, restaurant, and government offices. A few high-rise buildings are interspersed among low- and mid-rise buildings. Although the Mid-Market neighborhood contains high-rise buildings, it has a different urban character than the core of the downtown area, with its densely clustered high-rise development and relatively compact urban form tapering off to low-rise development at its periphery. In the more dispersed, non-uniform urban pattern of the Mid-Market neighborhood, the relatively few high-rise buildings are more isolated and stand out in profile against the sky. The range of low- and mid-rise building heights contributes dips, smaller peaks, and variety within this urban pattern.

The portion of Market Street near the site is occupied by low-, mid-, and high-rise buildings with uses including residential, hotel, retail, commercial, restaurant, and government offices. These buildings were constructed at various times during the twentieth century. Most buildings are one to five stories in height; taller buildings include the eight-story Ramada Hotel on the southeast side of Market Street to the northeast of the SCIF headquarters, the historic 11-story San Francisco Merchandise Mart building on the southeast side of Market Street between Ninth and Tenth Streets (facing the project site from the opposite side of Ninth Street), the 30-story residential/commercial/office Fox Plaza tower located in the triangular block bounded by Polk, Hayes, and Market Streets west of the project site, and the existing 17-story SCIF headquarters at 1275 Market Street on the corner of Ninth Street (northwest of the proposed construction site).

The Civic Center neighborhood of San Francisco is located north and west of the Mid-Market neighborhood and the project site. The Civic Center neighborhood has a similar urban form in terms of a relatively few high-rise buildings interspersed among low- and mid-rise buildings, which include public and cultural facilities such as City Hall, and a variety of other uses including office, commercial, residential, restaurant, and parking. Building ages vary, and heights vary as well, from one to 30 stories, including several high-rise buildings of 20 to 30 stories in height, a number of older low-rise buildings of one to four stories, and several intermediate-sized buildings of six to 17 stories.

Further west of the Mid-Market neighborhood and Civic Center, predominantly residential and neighborhood commercial uses predominate. Many buildings date from the early portion of the twentieth century, and heights are lower, generally two to five stories. To the south and southeast of the project site and the Mid-Market neighborhood, buildings are of similar age and height, and are occupied by a variety of retail, commercial and residential uses.

To the east and northeast of the Mid-Market neighborhood are the South of Market, Tenderloin, and Union Square areas, with a pattern of mixed building heights and a variety of uses, including commercial and residential. Further northeast is the downtown area, with the clustered high-rise buildings mentioned above.

IMMEDIATE PROJECT VICINITY

The project site is located on the southwestern side of the block bounded by Market, Ninth, Mission and Eighth Streets. The visual character of the immediate project vicinity is varied, with contrasting building heights, massing, styles, and uses. The project site is currently occupied by a landscaped parking lot. Ninth Street between Market and Mission Streets is occupied by surface parking and buildings ranging in height from one to 17 stories, constructed at various times during the twentieth century, and occupied by retail, hotel, restaurant, bar, residential, office, and institutional uses. Most buildings are built to lot lines; some with setbacks above the first two stories.

High-rise buildings near the project site include the historic San Francisco Merchandise Mart building on the southeast side of Market Street (facing the project site from the opposite side of Ninth Street), an 11-story stone- and glass-clad building, and the existing 17-story SCIF headquarters at 1275 Market Street on the corner of Ninth Street (northwest of the proposed construction site), a stone- and glass-clad building of contemporary design.

Other buildings in the immediate vicinity of the project site range from one to six stories, including the two-story San Francisco Religious Society of Friends building on Ninth Street adjacent to the project site to the southeast, and several early twentieth century masonry buildings south of the project site.

Proposed Changes in Visual Quality on the Project Site

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

A project may result in significant adverse visual quality impacts if it: 1) degrades or obstructs scenic views from public areas, 2) introduces new sources of light or glare, or 3) has demonstrable negative aesthetic effects on the character of the surrounding area.

PROJECT DESIGN

The proposed project would consist of a 12-story office building on the northeast side of Ninth Street, south of Market Street. The building would be approximately 159 feet high, plus a 39-foot mechanical penthouse. The proposed project would be similar in height to the adjacent existing SCIF building immediately to the northwest, but would be higher than most other nearby buildings; portions of the proposed building would be visible from some near or distant vantage points. The project design would be contemporary in style, and is intended to complement immediately surrounding buildings in terms of design and materials and specifically SCIF's building at 1275 Market Street.

The building's footprint would be comparable in size with the existing SCIF headquarters building immediately to the northwest. The proposed building would be most visible from the south, along Ninth Street, while views of much of the building would be blocked from the north by the existing SCIF headquarters.

The proposed project would create a continuous street wall where there is now surface parking. Also, the project would be built to sidewalk and side lot lines, consistent with other buildings in the project vicinity.

The proposed building's massing would appear similar to the existing SCIF headquarters at 1275 Market Street. The building's shape would be relatively rectangular, rather than composed of successively setback tiers. The Ninth Street and southeast facades of the building would feature glass curtain walls, with the south and west corners constructed of natural stone material to echo the facade of the existing headquarters building. A row of ornamental trees along the roofline would be visible from the south. Between the proposed new building and the existing SCIF headquarters, and visible from viewpoints

directly across Ninth Street, would be an exterior, landscaped open space, and a second floor pedestrian bridge connecting the two buildings. The open space would be accessible to the public.

Views of the Proposed Project

As shown in Figures 13 and 14, when viewed from immediate vicinity of the Market/Ninth Street intersection, a portion of the project would be visible. From Market Street further northeast and southwest of the intersection, the existing SCIF building at the southeast corner of Market and Ninth Streets and the 11-story San Francisco Merchandise Mart building at the southwest corner of Market and Ninth Streets would screen views of the proposed project. The project design would unite with the existing SCIF headquarters, although this contemporary design would contrast with the historic design character of the San Francisco Merchandise Mart. Nevertheless, while the proposed building would be visible from some viewpoints to the north, it would not constitute a prominent new visual form from the north, due to the presence of existing nearby buildings.

When viewed from the south, the proposed building would introduce a high-rise building adjacent to the existing SCIF headquarters. The proposed project would be substantially taller than buildings to the south, and the upper half of the project would be clearly visible from Ninth Street. However, the overall visual impact of the proposed project would be moderated because the existing SCIF building has similar height and massing, and already occupies much of the skyline that would be occupied by the proposed building. As discussed above, the project design would unite with the existing SCIF headquarters, although this contemporary design would also contrast with the early twentieth century character of buildings south of the project. Viewed from the southeast along Ninth Street, the northeastern portion of the proposed building and the mechanical penthouse at the top would be visually apparent, extending above the existing SCIF building; however, this would not constitute a prominent addition to the existing skyline.

The project would be visible from some distant vantage points, especially to the south and east, but the project's visual prominence would be reduced by the existence of the adjacent SCIF building with similar height and bulk, as well as other buildings in project vicinity including the eight-story Ramada Hotel on the southeast side of Market Street to the northeast of the SCIF headquarters, the 11-story San Francisco Merchandise Mart building facing the project site from the opposite side of Ninth Street) and

the 30-story Fox Plaza tower located in the triangular block bounded by Polk, Hayes, and Market Streets west of the project site. These intervening structures would screen much or all of the proposed building from many of the distant vantage points to the west and north.

From distant vantage points to the south and east from which the proposed project would be visible, it would constitute a new visual element and be one of the taller buildings of the Mid-Market skyline, although it would not exceed the heights of the highest existing buildings. The proposed project, although apparent from these distant vantage points, would be similar in visual character to other high-rise buildings in the existing Mid-Market cityscape, and would constitute an addition to the prevailing view rather than a contrasting visual element.

Views currently available to the public in the vicinity of the project site are available from Civic Center Plaza and United Nations Plaza, one block north and one block northeast of the project site, respectively, as shown in Figure 1: Project Location, page 20. Views from Civic Center Plaza (located immediately east of City Hall) would not be substantially affected because the existing SCIF building to the northwest of the proposed project site would screen most or all of the proposed building. Similarly, the project's effect on views from United Nations Plaza farther east would be limited by intervening buildings, including the existing SCIF building, the eight-story Ramada Hotel located northeast of the SCIF building, the San Francisco Public Library located in the block bounded by Larkin, Fulton, Hyde, and Grove Streets, and the commercial buildings located between Market Street and the south side of United Nations Plaza. From limited areas at the northwest corner of United Nations Plaza and the fountain at the eastern end, constituting a small proportion of the total area of the Plaza, a portion of the top of the proposed building may be visible. Where the proposed project would be visible, it would constitute a small addition to, and have a correspondingly small effect on, the skyline viewed from United Nations Plaza. More distant public spaces include Howard-Langton Mini-Park, located approximately one-third mile east of the project site, and Father Alfred Boeddeker Neighborhood Park, located approximately one-half mile northeast of the project site. From these parks, intervening buildings would block most or all views of the proposed project, which in any event would be less prominent due to its distance.

The topography of the area surrounding the site is flat, and existing development limits views from streets and sidewalks, especially to the north and west of the site. The proposed project would be

constructed within the existing block and street configuration and would not block any views along public view corridors, including Market, Ninth, Larkin, and Hayes Streets. Thus, while the proposed project would be visible from various locations, including some open spaces, it would not block any public view corridors.

In addition to the public views discussed above, private buildings in the area may have views of hills to the west, the downtown skyline to the northeast, or beyond. Views from private properties may be altered by the proposed construction, although this effect would be limited by the fact that the neighborhood is already densely developed. While the loss or change of views could be of concern to nearby property owners, and might be an issue worthy of discussion and consideration prior to the City's approval or disapproval of the project, it would not be considered a significant environmental impact.

CUMULATIVE VIEWS

In addition to the 159-foot plus 39-foot mechanical penthouse, 12-story proposed project, four other project are proposed within the project area: the multi-towered 1177 Market Street residential development (extending to Mission Street and ranging up to 28 stores and 240 feet); the 1160 Mission Street 23-story, 240-foot high residential project; the One Polk Street/Two Fell Street 17-story, 200-foot high apartment building; the three-towered (135 feet, 14 stories; 200 feet, 21 stories; and 320 feet, 24 stories) mixed-use project at 1407-1435 Market Street; and the 11-story, 111-foot high Mercy Affordable housing project on Mission Street between 9th and 10th Streets. These six proposed projects would alter the visual landscape of the area, however, they would not be the tallest buildings, and would part of the continual trend toward increased building height and density in the Mid-Market area. Cumulatively, the proposed project and other projects would not degrade or obstruct scenic views of Twin Peaks to west, the Ferry Building or San Francisco Bay to the east, or scenic views from public areas including Civic Center or United Nations Plaza. Thus, there would not be a significant environmental impacts on cumulative visual quality.

Conclusion

The proposed 12-story-tall project would be a visual change as it would be higher than most buildings in the immediate vicinity, which are one to five stories in height; however, it would be similar in height

to, or lower than, the highest buildings in the area, and similar in height to the adjacent SCIF headquarters. The design, materials, and exterior treatment of the proposed project would contrast in character with older buildings in the area, but would be consistent with the contemporary buildings in the area. While the project would be a noticeable new structure and would be fully or partially visible from some nearby and distant viewpoints, it would not represent a new form, a substantial increase in the existing scale of development, or a substantial new element in the existing skyline and urban character. Rather, it would represent an incremental increase in the number of high-rise buildings of contemporary design in the Mid-Market neighborhood.

The design of the proposed project would comply with Planning Commission Resolution No. 9212, which prohibits the use of mirrored or reflective glass.

Although visual quality is subjective, it cannot be concluded that the proposed building would result in a substantial, demonstrative, adverse aesthetic impact, or degrade the character of the site and its surroundings. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact on urban design and visual quality.

C. SHADOW AND WIND

Shadow

Planning Code Section 295, adopted in 1984 pursuant to voter approval of Proposition K, generally prohibits the issuance of building permits for structures over 40 feet in height that would cause significant new shade on open space under the jurisdiction of, or designated to be acquired by, the Recreation and Park Commission unless the Planning Commission, in consultation with the General Manager of the Recreation and Park Department, determines that the shade would not have a significant impact on the use of such property. This section describes the project's potential shadow impacts under *Planning Code* Section 295 on streets, sidewalks, and public open space.

Setting

The project site is located in the Mid-Market neighborhood of San Francisco, south and east of the Civic Center neighborhood. The Mid-Market neighborhood and Civic Center areas are developed with an interspersed mixture of low-, mid-, and high-rise buildings. Open space in the vicinity of the project site

includes Civic Center Plaza, located approximately two blocks northwest of the proposed project site, and United Nations Plaza, located approximately two blocks northeast of the proposed project site.

The proposed project site is generally southeast of Civic Center Plaza. Civic Center Plaza is a landscaped open space with benches, paths and a children's playground, occupying the block bounded by Larkin, McAllister, Polk, and Grove Streets. San Francisco City Hall faces Civic Center Plaza from the west, Bill Graham Civic Auditorium faces the Plaza from the south, and the San Francisco Main Library and Asian Art Museum face the Plaza from the east.

Impacts

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

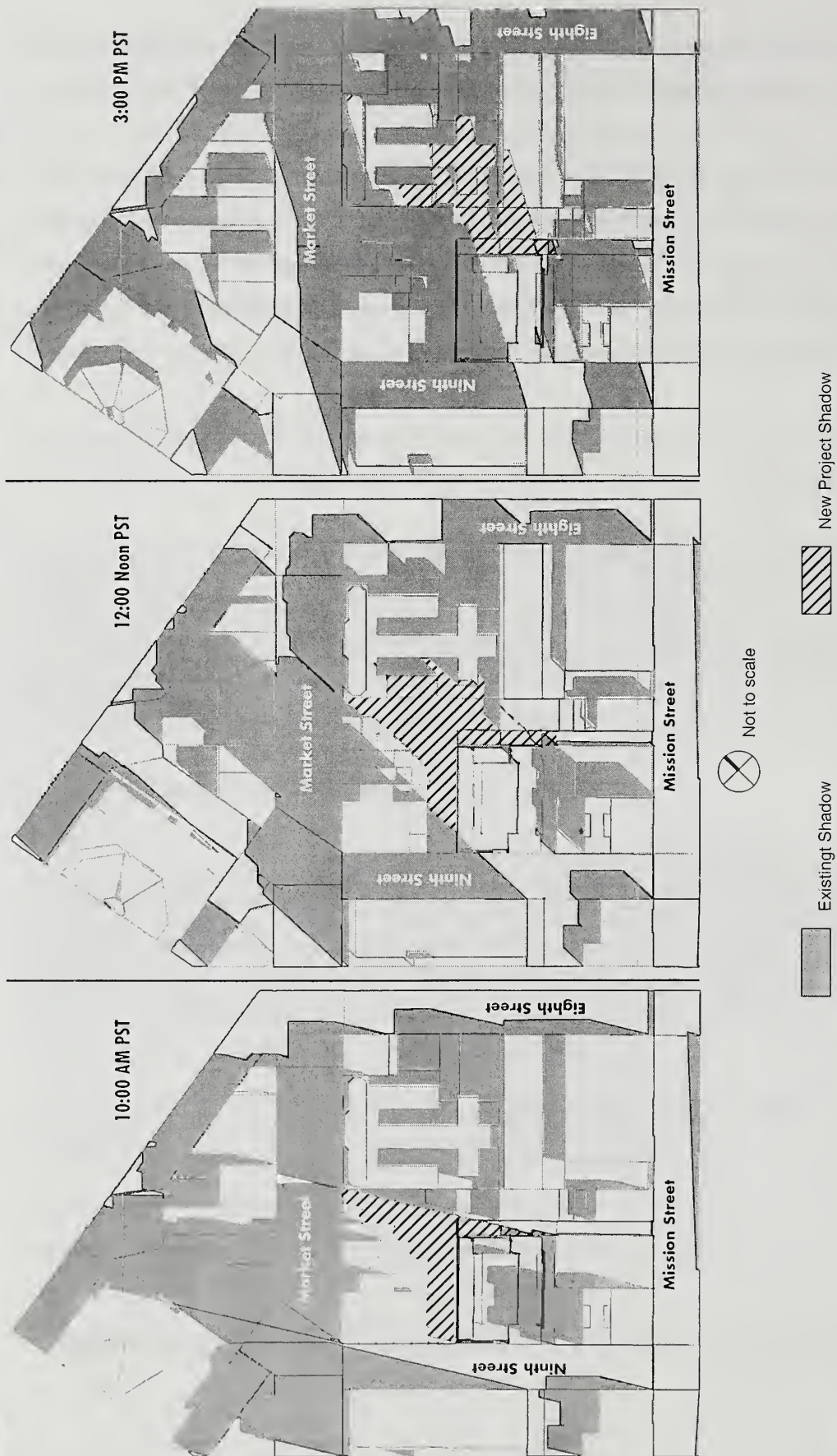
Under *Planning Code* Section 295 (Proposition K, the Sunlight Ordinance), an adverse shadow effect is defined as new shadow cast by new development over 40 feet in height on existing or proposed open spaces under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department that would be in excess of any allowable new shadow increment on that open space any time of the year between one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset. The effective allowable new shadow increment for Civic Center Plaza is zero.

Project Shadows at Selected Times of Day and Year

Due to intervening buildings, the project would not shade the publicly accessible open space at Civic Center Plaza during one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset at any time during the year. Shadows from the proposed project could not reach United Nations Plaza due to its location northeast of the project site.

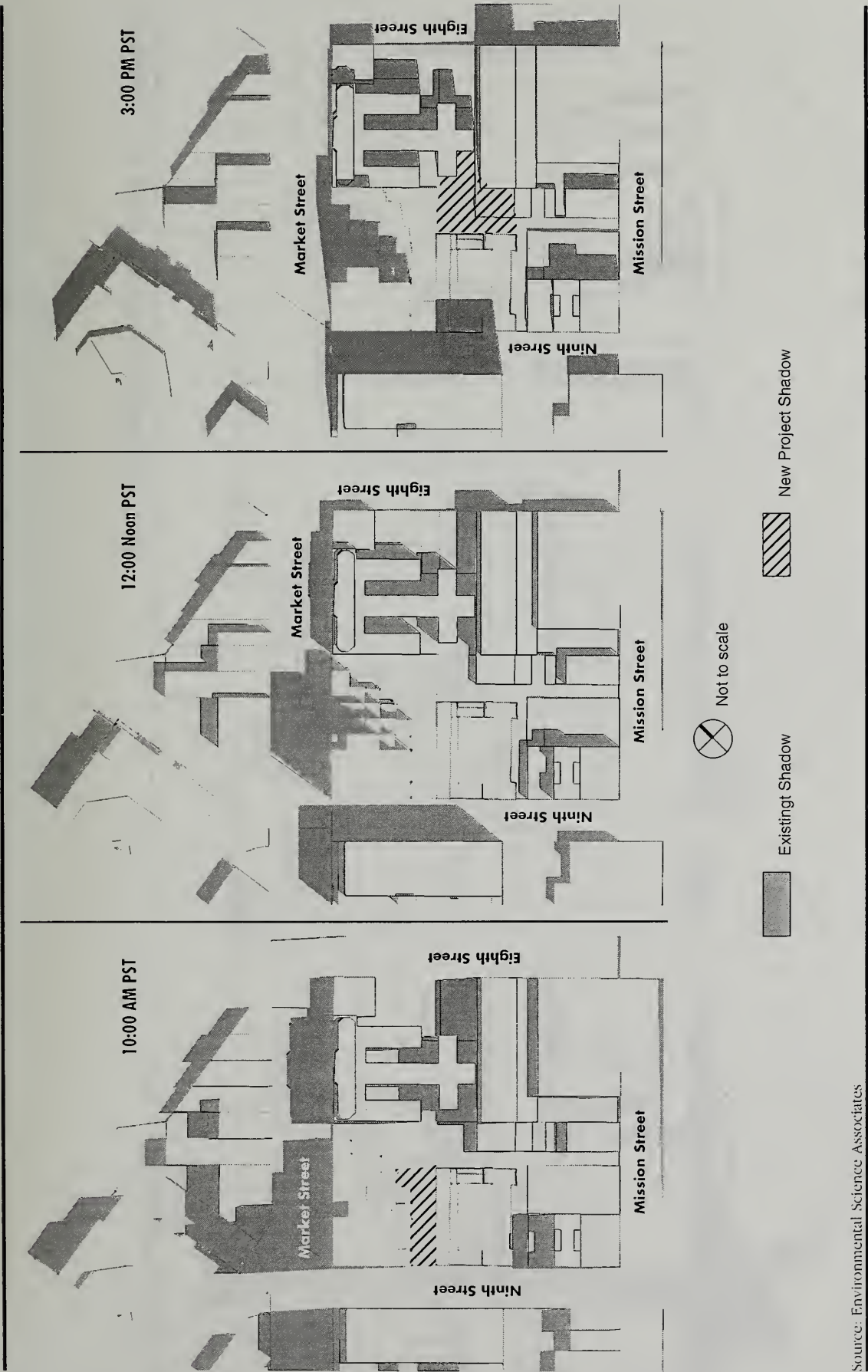
The analysis includes shadow cast by existing buildings and the proposed project on streets and sidewalks in the project area. Shadow patterns for the project are shown for 10:00 AM, noon and 3:00 PM for the four seasons: the winter solstice, when the sun is at its lowest; the summer solstice, when the sun is at its highest; and during the spring and fall equinoxes, when the sun is at its midpoint.¹ Sunlight

¹ For this analysis, Pacific Standard Time is used in March and December, and Pacific Daylight Time is used for June and September.



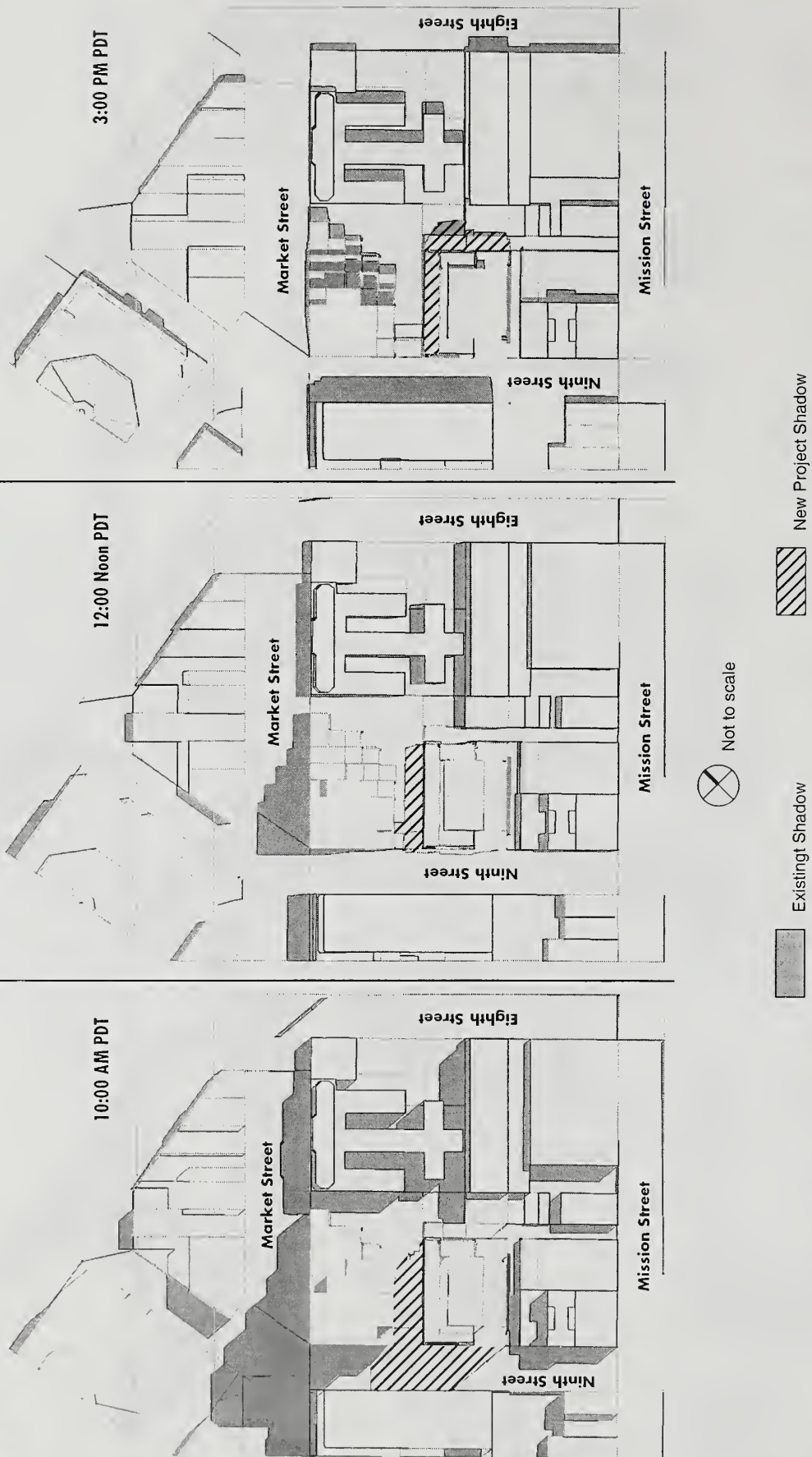
Source: Environmental Science Associates

PROJECT SHADOW PATTERNS—DECEMBER 21 FIGURE 15



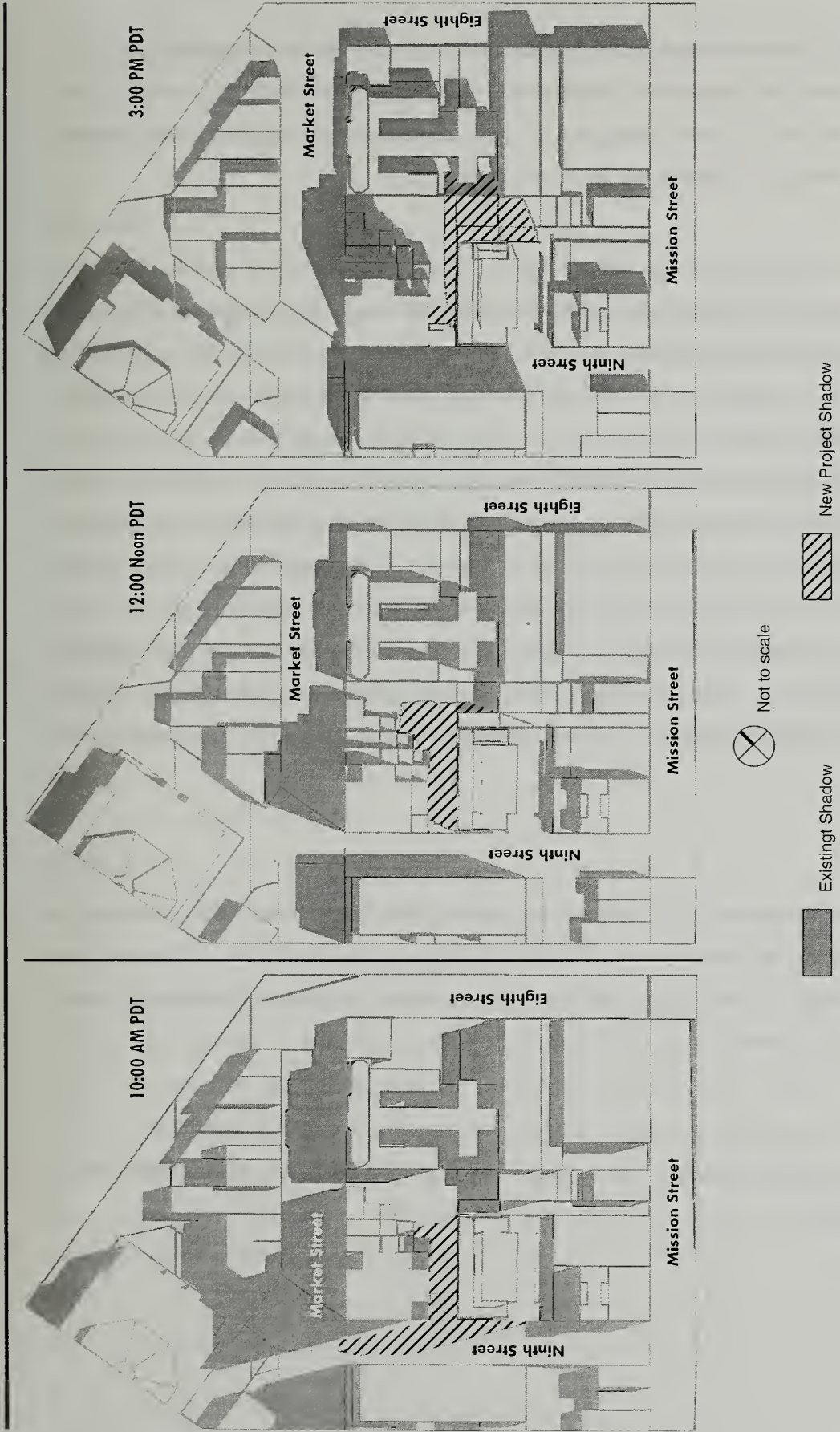
PROJECT SHADOW PATTERNS — MARCH 21 FIGURE 16

Source: Environmental Science Associates



Source: Environmental Science Associates

PROJECT SHADOW PATTERNS—JUNE 21 FIGURE 17



Source: Environmental Science Associates

PROJECT SHADOW PATTERNS—SEPTEMBER 21 FIGURE 18

conditions from June 21 through December 21 are mirrored from December 21 to June 21, allowing for the adjustment of Daylight Savings Time. Figures 15, 16, 17, and 18, pages 54 through 57, depict shadow impacts at 'snapshot' moments throughout the year. Shadows created by the proposed project, as well as existing buildings and structures, are shown in dark grey.

December 21

At 10:00 AM on December 21, the project would create new shadow on a narrow segment of the south sidewalk in the 1200 block of Market Street, a small area at the northwest end of Laskie Street, and the open space between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings (Figure 15, page 54). The existing SCIF building already shades virtually all of the segment of Market Street that would have been shaded by the proposed project in the absence of the existing SCIF building. At noon, the project would shade adjacent buildings, the northwest end of Laskie Street, and the open space between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings, but would not create new shadow on Market Street, Ninth Street, or other streets. Existing buildings already shade the portions of Market Street that could have been shaded by the proposed project in the absence of those buildings. At 3:00 PM, the project would shade adjacent buildings, the northwest end of Laskie Street, and a small portion of the open space between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings, but would not create new shadow on Market Street, Ninth Street, or other streets.

March 21

At 10:00 AM on March 21, the project would create new shadow along the sidewalk on Ninth Street fronting the existing and proposed SCIF buildings, and the open space between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings (Figure 16, page 55). The proposed building would not shade Market Street, Laskie Street, or other streets.

At noon, the project would shade the northwest end of Laskie Street and the open space between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings. The proposed building would not shade Market Street, Ninth Street, or other streets.

At 3:00 PM, the project would shade adjacent buildings and the northwest end of Laskie Street, but would not create new shadow on the open space between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings, or on Market Street, Ninth Street, or other streets.

June 21

At 10:00 AM on June 21, the project would create new shadow on a segment of Ninth Street, including sidewalks, as well as the open space between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings and a small portion of the existing SCIF building (Figure 17, page 56). The proposed building would not shade Market Street, Laskie Street, or other streets.

At noon, the project would shade the Ninth Street sidewalk near the proposed building and the open space between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings, but would not create new shadow on Market Street, Laskie Street, or other streets.

At 3:00 PM, the project would shade the northwest end of Laskie Street and under the pedestrian bridge between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings, but would not create new shadow elsewhere on the open space between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings, or on Market Street, Ninth Street, or other streets.

September 21

At 10:00 AM on September 21, the project would create new shadow on the sidewalk of Ninth Street fronting the proposed building, and a segment of the Ninth Street roadway, as well as a portion of the existing SCIF building and the open space between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings. As shown in Figure 18, page 57, the proposed building would not shade Market Street, Laskie Street, or other streets, although portions of these streets are already shaded by existing buildings.

At noon, the project would shade the northwest end of Laskie Street, the open space between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings, and a portion of the existing SCIF building. The proposed project would not shade Market or Ninth Streets.

At 3:00 PM, the project would shade the northwest end of Laskie Street, a portion of the open space between the existing and proposed SCIF buildings, and adjacent buildings. The proposed project would not shade Market or Ninth Streets.

CONCLUSION

The project would not have a significant impact because it would not cast new shadow on Civic Center Plaza or any other open space under the jurisdiction of, or designated to be acquired by, the Recreation and Park Commission. The project would cast new shadow at various times of the year on portions of Market, Ninth, and Laskie Streets, and on the open space between the proposed and existing SCIF buildings.

Wind SETTING

U.S. Weather Bureau and Bay Area Air Quality Management District data show that westerly (from the west) to northwesterly winds, reflecting the persistence of sea breezes, are the most frequent wind directions in San Francisco. Wind direction is most variable in the winter, when strong southerly winds, frequent during an approach of a winter storm, occur. Predictions of wind speed are based upon historic wind records from the U.S. Weather Bureau weather station atop the old Federal Building at 50 United Nations Plaza during the years 1945-1950. Of the 16 primary wind directions measured at the weather station, four directions occur most frequently and account for most of the strongest winds: northwest, west-northwest, west, and west-southwest. Calm conditions occur about two percent of the time. Average wind speeds are highest during summer and lowest during winter. The strongest peak winds occur during winter, when speeds of up to 47 miles per hour (mph) have been recorded. Typically, the highest wind speeds occur during the mid-afternoon hours, and the lowest occur during early morning hours.

Wind Hazard Criterion

In addition to comfort criteria described below, the San Francisco *Planning Code* (Section 148) establishes a wind hazard criterion. The hazard criterion is set at an hourly averaged wind speed of 26 mph, not to be exceeded more than once during the year. In the C-3 Districts, no building or addition

would be permitted that would cause wind speeds to exceed the hazard level of more than one hour of any year.

Pedestrian Comfort Criteria

Wind conditions affect pedestrian comfort on sidewalks and in other public and publicly accessible areas. The comfort of pedestrians varies under different conditions of sun exposure, temperature, clothing, and wind speed.

Large buildings can redirect wind flows around buildings and divert winds downward to street level, resulting in increased wind speed and turbulence there. To provide a comfortable wind environment for people in San Francisco, the City established wind criteria for the downtown area within Section 148 of the *Planning Code*. The comfort criteria are based on pedestrian-level wind speeds that include the effects of turbulence. These adjusted wind speeds are referred to as "equivalent wind speeds." Section 148 of the *Planning Code* establishes an equivalent wind speed of seven mph in public seating areas and 11 mph in areas of substantial pedestrian use, known as comfort criteria. New buildings and additions to buildings may not cause ground-level winds to exceed these levels more than 10 percent of the time.¹ According to the *Planning Code*, if existing winds exceed the comfort level or if a proposed building or addition may cause ambient speed to exceed the criteria, new buildings and additions must be designed to reduce ambient wind speeds to meet these requirements, unless certain requirements are met for an allowable exception as described in Section 148. Compliance with the Section would be considered as part of the project review process. In administering Section 148, the Planning Department requires wind tunnel testing for tall buildings. This report reviews wind impacts of the proposed project against the *Planning Code's* pedestrian comfort, sitting area comfort, and hazard criteria.

¹ The City *Planning Code* specifies the hours of 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM. The available weather data cover the hours of 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM. Thus, observation from two additional evening hours and one additional morning hour are included in these data. Because winds are generally stronger in the afternoon and evening than in the morning, this approximation is conservative – it is likely to overestimate the existing and projected wind speeds.

Methodology

Wind tunnel tests were conducted for the project site and vicinity under three scenarios: 1) the setting under existing conditions; 2) existing conditions plus the proposed project; and 3) cumulative development conditions including the proposed project. The wind tunnel analysis report with detailed methodology and results is included in Appendix B: Wind Tunnel Study.

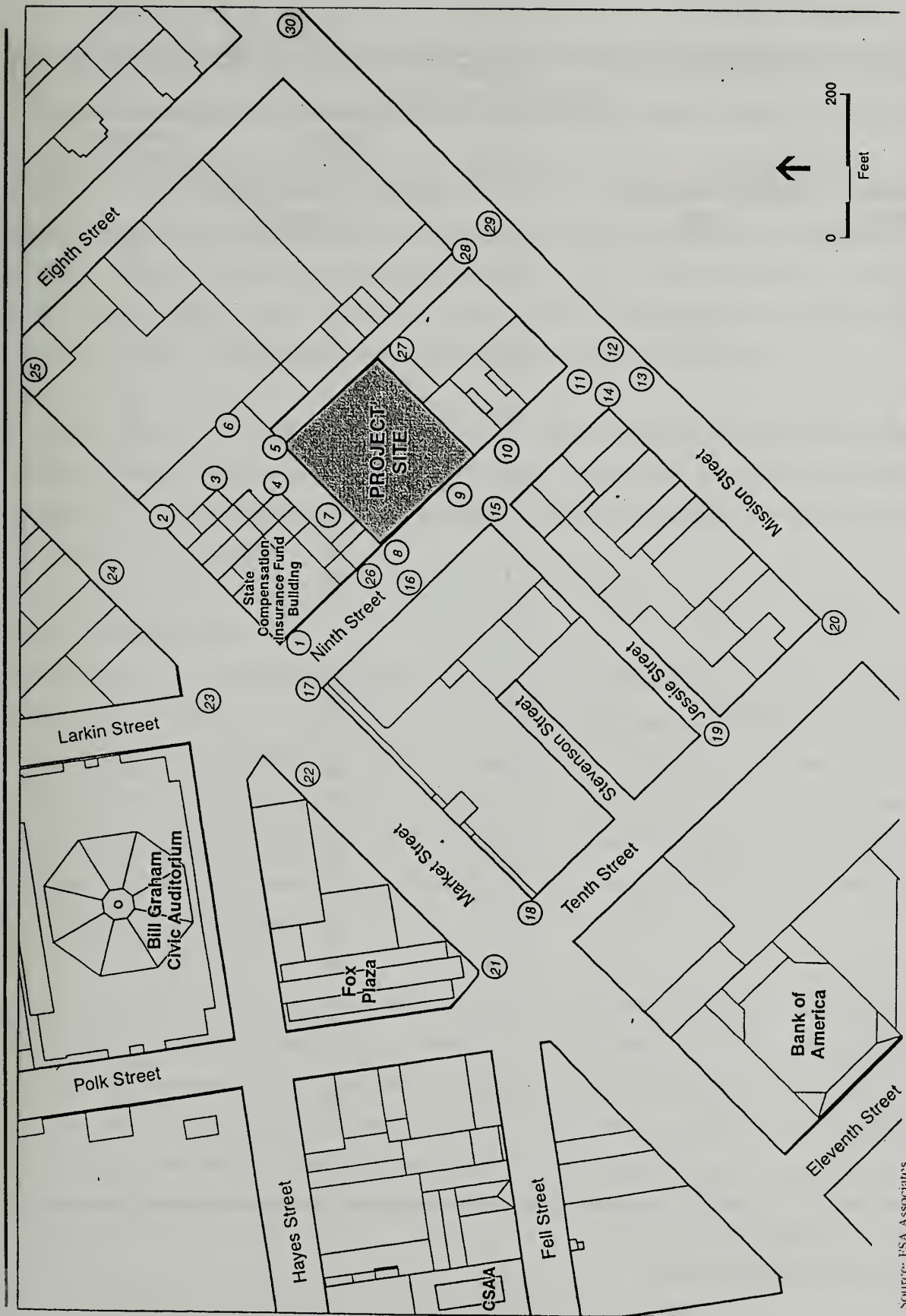
Using a wind tunnel and a scale model of the project site and surrounding area, wind speed measurements were taken at 30 pedestrian-level locations for all scenarios (locations 1 through 30) (see Figure 19, Wind Test Point Location Map, page 63). All 30 test locations were considered to be pedestrian, rather than sitting locations. In accordance with the San Francisco wind ordinance methodology, the model was tested for four wind directions: northwest, west-northwest, west, and west-southwest.

Existing Conditions

The setting conditions analyzed in the wind tunnel consisted of a scale model of the buildings and structures in the project vicinity. Development in the vicinity is characterized by a combination of some low-rise buildings and vacant land, with several mid- and high-rise structures fronting Market Street and interspersed throughout the area. Some of the more notable mid- and high-rise buildings include the California State Automobile Association building on Van Ness Avenue between Fell and Hayes Streets, the Fox Plaza building on Market Street between Polk and Hayes Streets, and the Bank of America data center building on Market Street between Tenth and Eleventh Streets.

Existing conditions include some of the windiest in San Francisco. The average wind speed for all 30 test points in this general vicinity is slightly above 14 mph, as shown in Table 1 on page 64. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more occur at 17 of the total 30 locations. Of the remaining locations, nine meet the *Planning Code*'s pedestrian-comfort criterion value of below 11 mph. The highest wind speeds in the vicinity (23 mph) occur northwest² of the site, at the southernmost corner of Fox Plaza, near the intersection of Market and Polk Streets.

² Directional references in the text use Ninth Street as local north-south and Market Street as local east-west. References to winds always use the true compass directions from which the wind blows.



Source: ESA Associates

WIND SPEED MEASUREMENT LOCATIONS FIGURE 19

Table 1
Wind Comfort Analysis

References		Existing	Proposed Project	Cumulative (including Project)
Location Number	Comfort Criterion Speed (mph)	Measured Equivalent Wind Speed (mph)		
1	11	12*	11	12*
2	11	20*	19*	20*
3	11	9	9	8
4	11	10	9	9
5	11	15*	12*	12*
6	11	20*	18*	18*
7	11	9	10	10
8	11	18*	15*	12*
9	11	16*	16*	17*
10	11	11	13*	13*
11	11	11	14*	14*
12	11	12*	13*	12*
13	11	14*	15*	15*
14	11	11	11	11
15	11	13*	13*	14*
16	11	15*	16*	15*
17	11	15*	14*	14*
18	11	18*	18*	17*
19	11	17*	18*	14*
20	11	15*	15*	15*
21	11	23*	23*	23*
22	11	12*	12*	11
23	11	15*	14*	16*
24	11	11	11	11
25	11	17*	18*	18*
26	11	18*	12*	13*
27	11	14*	18*	18*
28	11	11	10	8
29	11	13*	12*	11
30	11	9	9	9

Source: Chuck Bennett, May 2002.

* Exceeds 11 mph Comfort Criterion.

The *Code*'s wind hazard criterion is currently exceeded at seven of the 30 test locations; the total duration of the exceedance is 210 hours per year.

Winds in the vicinity of the site are strongly influenced by the presence of the Fox Plaza building located on Market Street, between Polk and Hayes Streets, one block northwest of the site. The Bank of America, California State Automobile Association, and Fox Plaza buildings interact to create very strong, turbulent winds at and near ground levels at the bases of the buildings and generally within a several block radius of the triangular area roughly outlined by the three buildings.

Furthermore, prior wind tests have shown that the wind conditions in this area are chaotic – the locations of the exceedances can be moved and their durations can be substantially altered by relatively small changes in the configuration of buildings or the addition of buildings to vacant properties within a block of the high-rise buildings in this area.

Pedestrian Comfort Criteria

At the nine points surrounding the project site, wind speeds are between nine and 20 mph. The highest wind speeds (20 mph) occur within the open space area behind the adjacent SCIF building; wind speeds at the other three points within the open space area range from nine to 15 mph. Wind speeds at the two points adjacent to the pedestrian bridge are nine mph and 18 mph, respectively, and at the two points along the Ninth Street frontage are 18 mph and 16 mph, respectively. At the point in the alley near the southeast corner of the site, wind speeds are currently 14 mph. Three of the nine points currently meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

Wind speeds at the 12 locations along Ninth Street between Market and Mission Streets range from 11 to 18 mph. The highest wind speeds (18 mph) both occur near the southwest corner of the existing SCIF building. Along the west side of Ninth Street, wind speeds at all five points range from 11 to 15 mph; only one point meets the pedestrian-comfort criterion. Wind speeds range from 11 to 18 mph at the seven points on the east side of Ninth Street, where, as noted above, the highest wind speeds occur. Three of the total 12 test locations currently meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

At the nine points along Market Street between Tenth and Eighth Streets, wind speeds range from 11 to 20 mph. The highest wind speed (23 mph) occurs northwest of the site, at the southernmost corner of Fox Plaza, near the intersection of Market and Polk Streets. Wind speeds range from 12 to 20 mph at all five points along the south side of Market Street; none of the points meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion. Wind speeds range from 11 to 23 mph at the four points along the north side of Market Street; only one of those four meets the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

The wind speeds of the eight locations on Mission Street between Tenth and Eighth Streets, range from nine to 15 mph. The highest wind speed (15 mph) occurs to the west of the site, at the northeast corner of Tenth and Mission Streets. Wind speeds range from 11 to 15 mph at the four points along the north side of Mission Street, and from nine to 14 mph at the four points along the south side of the street. Four of the eight points currently meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

Wind speeds of the two points located within the alley just south of the project site are 14 mph and 11 mph, respectively. The point closest to Mission Street meets the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

Wind Hazard Criterion

The *Code*'s wind hazard criterion is currently exceeded at seven of the total 30 test locations as shown in Table 2 on page 67. The total duration of these seven exceedances is 210 hours per year. Overall, five of the seven wind hazard exceedances occur at locations adjacent to the currently vacant project site. The longest duration exceedance occurs near the northeast corner of the site (60 hours per year), in the open space area behind the existing SCIF building. Of the remaining exceedances, one is located within the open space area, and three are along the site's Ninth Street frontage. The total duration of these five exceedances adjacent to the site is 97 hours per year.

The remaining two wind hazard exceedances now occur northwest of the project site, at locations on Market Street near the high-rise Fox Plaza building. The longest duration exceedance occurs at the southernmost corner of the Fox Plaza building (93 hours per year), and the lower of the two exceedances occurs directly across Market Street, at Tenth Street. The total duration of these two Market Street exceedances is 112 hours per year.

Table 2
Wind Hazard Analysis

References		Existing	Proposed Project	Cumulative (including Project)
Location Number	Comfort Criterion Speed (mph)	Measured Equivalent Wind Speed (mph)		
1	36	22	20	21
2	36	34	33	35
3	36	19	22	16
4	36	18	19	19
5	36	36*	33	29
6	36	48*	48*	46*
7	36	17	23	22
8	36	42*	33	28
9	36	37*	36	36
10	36	23	31	32
11	36	23	31	30
12	36	20	22	21
13	36	26	27	25
14	36	25	25	23
15	36	31	30	31
16	36	35	37*	34
17	36	31	30	33
18	36	42*	40*	40*
19	36	30	32	24
20	36	27	26	27
21	36	50*	49*	48*
22	36	30	34	28
23	36	25	25	27
24	36	25	24	25
25	36	31	33	32
26	36	41*	23	29
27	36	32	45*	43*
28	36	21	20	19
29	36	23	22	20
30	36	24	21	20

Source: Chuck Bennett, May 2002

* Exceeded 26 mph averaged wind speed for a full hour.

In addition to the hazard exceedances measured in this test, other existing hazard exceedances are known to exist nearby. For example, the wind speeds at many other locations along Van Ness Ave, and Fell, Polk, Market, and Tenth Streets, are expected to exceed the hazard criterion under existing conditions.

Winds in the vicinity of the site are dominated by the presence of the Fox Plaza, California State Automobile Association, and Bank of America buildings, which interact to create very strong, turbulent winds at and near ground levels at the bases of the buildings, and generally within a several block radius of the triangular area roughly outlined by the three buildings.

Furthermore, prior wind tests have shown that the wind conditions in this area are chaotic – the locations of the exceedances can be moved and their durations can be substantially altered by relatively small changes in the configuration of buildings or the addition of buildings to vacant properties within a block of the high-rise buildings in this area.

IMPACTS

Significance Criteria

A project that would cause equivalent wind speeds to newly reach or exceed 26 mph for a single hour of the year would be considered to have a significant impact. A project that would exceed the comfort standards would not be considered to have a significant adverse impact.

Existing Conditions Plus the Proposed Project

The conditions tested in this scenario consisted of the existing buildings and structures in the project vicinity, plus a model of the proposed project in place of the existing parking lot at the project site.

Comfort Criterion

Based on the results of the wind tunnel study, conditions with the project would be slightly less windy. The average wind speed for all 30 test points would decrease slightly, but would equal 14 mph. Wind speeds in pedestrian areas would range from nine to 23 mph. The project would eliminate the existing pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedance located at the northwest corner of the existing SCIF building

on Ninth Street, and would create two new exceedances downwind of the site along the east side of Ninth Street. Eight of the total 30 points would meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11 mph.

With the project, as compared to existing conditions, wind speeds would increase at nine locations, remain unchanged at 11 locations and decrease at 10 locations. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more would occur at 14 locations, and the highest wind speed (23 mph) in the vicinity would continue to occur at the southernmost corner of the Fox Plaza building, at Market Street.

With the project, wind speeds would range between nine and 18 mph at the nine points surrounding the project site. Overall, wind conditions at the locations surrounding the site would improve, with the exception of the point downwind of the site in the alley, where the wind speed would increase by four mph. At the four points within the open space area behind the existing SCIF building, wind speeds would remain the same or decrease between one and three mph. At the two points adjacent to the pedestrian bridge, wind speeds would increase slightly by one mph, or decrease by five mph. Wind speeds at the two points adjacent to the Ninth Street frontage would decrease by four mph, or remain the same, respectively. Three of the nine locations would continue to meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion value.

Wind speeds at the 12 locations along Ninth Street between Market and Mission Streets would range from 11 to 16 mph. Wind speed changes between ± 1 mph would occur at all but four of the 12 points; at the two points immediately south and downwind of the site, wind speed increases of three and four mph, respectively, would occur, and at the two points adjacent to the pedestrian bridge wind speed decreases of four and five mph, respectively, would occur. A decrease of one mph at the existing exceedance at the northwest corner of the existing SCIF building would result in its elimination, while increases of three and four mph, respectively, would create two new exceedances at the locations directly south of and downwind of the site. Only two of the total 12 locations would meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion value.

With the project, wind speeds at the nine points along Market Street between Tenth and Eighth Streets would range from 11 to 23 mph. Wind speeds at the points upwind from the site would remain unchanged, or would change by ± 1 mph; wind speed changes of zero to one mph would occur at the

three points downwind from the site. The decrease of one mph at the northwest corner of the existing SCIF building at Ninth and Market Streets would eliminate the existing exceedance; two of the nine points would meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

Wind speeds would range from nine to 15 mph at the eight points on Mission Street between Tenth and Eighth Streets. The wind speeds at the intersection of Mission and Ninth Streets would increase by zero to four mph; the increase of four mph at the northeast corner of the intersection would create a new exceedance. The wind speeds downwind of the project site would remain unchanged or decrease by one mph; the point near Tenth Street would also remain unchanged. Three of the eight points would continue to meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

Wind speeds at the two points located within the alley just south of the project site would be 18mph and 10 mph, respectively. The wind speed at the point adjacent to the southeast corner of the site would increase by four mph, whereas the point closest to Mission Street would decrease by one mph, and would continue to meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

Hazard Conditions

With the project, the *Code's* wind hazard criterion would be exceeded at five locations, for a total duration of 188 hours per year. The *Code's* wind hazard criterion is currently exceeded at seven of the 30 locations, with the total duration occurring for 210 hours per year.

The project would add two new exceedances, one directly across the street from the project site (two hours per year) and the other at the southeast corner of the site on Laskie Street (36 hours per year). The duration of the new exceedances would be 38 hours per year.

The project would eliminate four existing exceedances, all adjacent to the project site. One exceedance would be eliminated at the northeast corner of the site, within the open space area behind the existing SCIF building (one hour per year), and three along the Ninth Street frontage (19 hours per year, one hour per year, 16 hours per year). The duration of the eliminated exceedances would be 37 hours per year.

In addition to eliminating four existing exceedances and adding two new exceedances, the project would affect the duration of three existing exceedances by decreasing the duration of the three points by 22 hours per year.

Overall, the total duration of the exceedances with the project in place would be 188 hours per year, a decrease of about 22 hours per year from the 210 hours per year duration of the existing wind hazard exceedances. Therefore, the project would not be considered to have a significant adverse environmental impact on wind conditions.

Wind Impact Improvement Measure

The siting of a large structure is expected to change wind flows, speeding up the wind at some locations and slowing it elsewhere in the vicinity. As can be seen in the case of the proposed project site, which is located in a particularly windy area, even a moderate-size structure placed on this site can be expected to result in changes in the durations of criterion exceedances and changes in the locations at which those criterion exceedances occur. Experience indicates that for buildings in very windy areas it is common for new buildings to eliminate some existing exceedances and create others. In practice, it is not always possible to improve such remaining exceedances (as required by the language of the *Planning Code*).

The most notable increase in wind speeds due to the project would occur at three locations adjacent to and downwind of the site, where speeds would increase by three and four mph. The increase at two of those locations would create two new pedestrian-comfort exceedances. However, a decrease of one mph at the northwest corner of the existing SCIF building would eliminate an existing pedestrian comfort criterion exceedance. In addition, the project would add two new hazard criterion exceedances at a point directly across Ninth Street from the site and at the southeast corner of the site, and would eliminate the four existing hazards located adjacent to the site. Further, the project would decrease the total duration of the three existing hazard exceedances located near the Fox Plaza building and within the open space area behind the existing SCIF building by a net of 22 hours per year.

Given the existing windy conditions of the site and vicinity and the magnitude of changes in wind conditions that can reasonably be expected from the project, it is not believed possible to design any

structure that fully meets the goals of the project and which fully reduces ambient wind speeds to meet Section 148 comfort and hazard criteria at all locations in the vicinity of the site.

For this site, it cannot be assumed that reducing the size of the project or changes in the design of the project would have any proportional effect on the pedestrian-comfort exceedances; however, the duration of existing hazard exceedances could be affected by such changes.

Installation of large street trees (30 to 40 feet wide and 40 to 50 feet tall) along the Ninth Street sidewalk adjacent to the project site would noticeably reduce wind speeds that would occur in pedestrian areas. However, street trees would not necessarily provide sufficient wind speed reductions to eliminate the two new exceedances of the pedestrian-comfort criterion or the two new exceedances of the wind hazard criterion.

Given that several low structures and some vacant lands now exist to the northwest and west across Market Street, further development of upwind buildings to the height and bulk limits of the allowable zoning would be expected to reduce the speeds for the northwest, west-northwest, and west winds reaching the project, and thus reduce the wind speeds on sidewalks around and downwind of the project. Future infill development on available vacant lands south of Jessie Street between Ninth and Tenth Streets to the height and bulk limits of the allowable zoning would be expected to reduce the speeds for the southwest winds reaching the project site.

Cumulative Conditions

The cumulative development scenario consisted of existing buildings, the proposed project, and potential infill development along Jessie Street, between Ninth and Tenth Streets. With the project and the infill development, wind speeds would range from eight to 23 mph. The average wind speed for all 30 points would decrease by less than one mph, although the wind speed would remain near 14 mph. Nine of the 30 test points would meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion value. The project and infill development would eliminate two pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances, and add one new pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedance to the project setting.

Under Cumulative Plus Project conditions, as compared to Existing Plus Project conditions, wind speeds would increase at five locations, decrease at 11 locations and remain unchanged at 14 locations. The highest wind speed in the vicinity (23 mph) would continue to occur at the southernmost corner of the Fox Plaza building, northwest of the project site. Wind conditions within the immediate vicinity of the project site would slightly improve. Wind speeds at six of the nine points surrounding the project site would remain the same, and at a location within the open space area would decrease by one mph. At one of the two points adjacent to the Ninth Street frontage, wind speeds would decrease by three mph, while at the other point wind speeds would increase by one mph. In general, wind speed changes of ± 1 mph would occur at 12 of the total 30 test point locations adjacent to, or within the immediate vicinity of, the project site.

Under Cumulative Plus Project conditions, as compared to Existing conditions, wind speeds would increase at nine locations, decrease at 12 locations and remain unchanged at nine locations. The highest wind speed in the vicinity (23 mph) would continue to occur at the southernmost corner of the Fox Plaza building, northwest of the project site. Wind conditions within the immediate vicinity of the project site would slightly improve. Wind speeds surrounding the project site would increase at four locations and decrease at four locations. At one of the two points adjacent to the Ninth Street frontage, wind speeds would decrease by six mph, while at the other point wind speeds would increase by one mph. In general, wind speed changes of ± 1 mph would occur at 12 of the total 30 test point locations adjacent to, or within the immediate vicinity of, the project site.

Hazard Conditions

Rather than the five exceedances under Existing Plus Project Conditions, the *Code's* wind hazard criterion would be exceeded at four of the total 30 test locations under Cumulative Plus Project Conditions. The total duration of these four exceedances would be 141 hours per year. Overall, the total duration of the wind hazard exceedances with the addition of the infill development would be 141 hours per year, a decrease of about 47 hours per year from the 188 hours per year duration of the wind hazard exceedances in the project setting.

Under Cumulative Plus Project conditions, as compared to Existing conditions, there would be a decrease of about 69 hours per year from the 210 hours per year duration of the wind hazard exceedances in the project setting.

Conclusion

Given the existing windy conditions of the site and vicinity and the modest changes in wind conditions that can reasonably be expected from the project, it may not be possible to design any structure that fully meets the goals of the project and that fully reduces ambient wind speeds to meet Section 148 comfort criteria at all locations. For the project site, reducing the size or changing the design of the project may not have any effect on the pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances; however, the duration of existing hazard exceedances could be affected by such changes. The addition of large street trees (30 to 40 feet wide and 40 to 50 feet tall) along the Ninth Street sidewalk adjacent to the site could noticeably reduce wind speeds that would occur in pedestrian area, but this improvement would not necessarily provide sufficient wind reductions to eliminate the existing exceedances of the pedestrian-comfort criterion or the new exceedances of the hazard criterion. The project would neither specifically nor cumulatively have an adverse significant environmental impact on existing wind conditions.

D. TRANSPORTATION

A transportation study for the proposed project was conducted by Wilbur Smith Associates.³ The results are summarized in this section.

Setting

ROADWAY NETWORK

Regional Access

Interstate 80 (I-80) and US Highway 101 (US 101) provide the primary regional access to the project area. US 101 serves San Francisco and the Peninsula/South Bay, and extends north via the Golden Gate Bridge to the North Bay (via Van Ness Avenue or Lombard Street). I-80 connects San Francisco to the

³ Wilbur Smith Associates, *55 Ninth Street Transportation Study – Final Report, Case No. 2001.1039E*, July 16, 2002. This report is available by appointment for review in file No. 2002.1039E at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, fifth floor.

East Bay and points east via the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. US 101 and I-80 merge south of the project site. Nearby northbound/eastbound access is provided with an on-ramp at Eighth/Bryant and an off-ramp at Eighth/Harrison. Nearby southbound/westbound access is provided with an on-ramp at Tenth/Bryant and an off-ramp at Ninth/Bryant. Additional on- and off-ramps are located at Mission Street and South Van Ness Avenue. In addition, Interstate 280 (I-280) provides regional access from the South of Market area to southern San Francisco, the Peninsula and the South Bay. I-280 has an interchange with US 101 south of the project area. Nearby access to I-280 is provided with on- and off-ramps at the intersection of Sixth/Brannan.

Local Access

The following are the major streets in the local roadway network in the vicinity of the project site. It should be noted that in the South of Market area, streets that run in the northwest/southeast direction are generally considered north/south streets, whereas streets that run in the southwest/northeast direction are generally considered east/west streets.

Van Ness Avenue is the major north-south arterial in the central section of San Francisco. The roadway is part of US 101 between Lombard Street and the Central Freeway (via South Van Ness Avenue). In the vicinity of the project site, Van Ness Avenue has three travel lanes in each direction, plus on-street parking and sidewalks on both sides. Van Ness Avenue is designated as a Major Arterial in the CMP Network, part of the MTS Network, a Primary Transit Street (Transit Important), part of the Citywide Pedestrian Network, and a Neighborhood Commercial Street in the *San Francisco General Plan*.

Polk Street is a north-south arterial, which operates in both directions north of Grove Street, and operates one-way southbound south of Grove Street. South of Market Street, Polk Street becomes Tenth Street. In the vicinity of the project site, Polk Street has two travel lanes, sidewalks, on-street metered parking on the west side of the street, and a passenger loading bay on the east side. Polk Street is part of Citywide Bicycle Route #25 (which runs southbound on Polk Street and northbound on Larkin Street to the south of Turk Street).

Larkin Street is a north-south arterial, operating one-way in the northbound direction between Market and Grove Streets, and between McAllister and California Streets. Between McAllister and Grove

Streets, Larkin Street has three northbound travel lanes and one southbound travel lane. At Market Street, Ninth Street turns into Larkin Street. In the *San Francisco General Plan*, Larkin Street is classified as a Secondary Arterial in the CMP Network, part of the MTS Network, and as a Neighborhood Network Connection Street. Between Market and Turk Street, Larkin Street is part of Citywide Bicycle Route #25 (which runs southbound on Polk Street and northbound on Larkin Street to the south of Turk Street).

Hyde Street is a north-south roadway that operates between Jefferson Street and Market Street. South of Market Street, Hyde Street becomes Eighth Street. Hyde Street operates one-way southbound between Jefferson and Beach Streets, two-way between Beach and California Streets, and one-way southbound between California and Market Streets. In the vicinity of the project site, Hyde Street has three travel lanes, and sidewalks and on-street parking on both sides of the street. In the San Francisco General Plan, Hyde Street is designated as a Secondary Arterial.

Eleventh Street is a north-south roadway that extends from Market Street to Division Street. In the vicinity of the project site, Eleventh Street has one travel lane in each direction with on-street metered parking on both sides of the street. Eleventh Street is part of Citywide Bicycle Route #25 (northbound).

Tenth Street extends from Market Street to Division Street, and forms a one-way couplet with Ninth Street. In the vicinity of the project site, Tenth Street is a five-lane, one-way, southbound roadway with parking on the west side of the street. Tenth Street provides access to southbound US 101 via an on-ramp at Tenth/Bryant. Tenth Street is designated as a Major Arterial (between Market and Brannan Streets) in the CMP Network in the *San Francisco General Plan*. In addition, Tenth Street is part of Citywide Bicycle Route #25 (southbound).

Ninth Street extends from Division Street to Market Street, and forms a one-way couplet with Tenth Street. Ninth Street is generally a four-lane, one-way northbound roadway with parking on both sides (parking is prohibited during the PM peak period to provide additional travel lanes). Ninth Street provides direct northbound access from the US 101 northbound off-ramp at Ninth/Bryant and the I-80 westbound off-ramp at Eighth/Harrison (adjacent to the project site, Ninth Street has 10-foot-wide sidewalks). In the *San Francisco General Plan*, Ninth Street is designated as a Major Arterial (between

Brannan and Market Streets) in the CMP Network, part of the MTS Network and a Neighborhood Network Connection Street.

Eighth Street is a major north-south arterial that provides direct access to the project site. Between Market Street and Brannan Street, Eighth Street operates southbound-only, with four travel lanes and on-street parking on both sides of the street. South of Brannan Street, Eighth Street has two lanes of travel in the southbound direction and one lane in the northbound direction, with parking allowed on both sides of the street. Eighth Street is designated as a Major Arterial and part of the CMP and MTS networks in the *San Francisco General Plan*.

Grove Street is an east-west roadway that operates between Stanyan Street and Hyde and Market Streets. Near the project site, Grove Street has one travel lane in each direction, with on-street metered parking and sidewalks on both sides of the street. Grove Street is part of Citywide Bicycle Route #20 (eastbound).

Hayes Street is an east-west roadway that operates in the westbound direction only between Market/Ninth and Gough Street, and in both directions between Gough Street and Golden Gate Park. Near the project site, Hayes Street has three travel lanes with on-street metered parking on both sides of the street (on-street parking is prohibited during the weekday PM peak period to provide two additional travel lanes). In the *San Francisco General Plan*, Hayes Street is classified as a Major Arterial in the CMP Network.

Fell Street is an east-west arterial that runs between Market and Polk Streets and Golden Gate Park. Between Franklin and Gough Streets, Fell Street is a two-way street and operates one-way in the westbound direction west of Gough Street. Fell Street forms a one-way couplet with Oak Street. East of Franklin Street, Fell Street operates in the eastbound direction only. Fell Street is designated as a Major Arterial in the CMP Network and as part of the MTS Network in the *San Francisco General Plan*.

Oak Street is an east-west arterial that runs between Van Ness Avenue and Golden Gate Park. West of Franklin Street, Oak Street operates in the eastbound direction only, and forms a one-way couplet with Fell Street. Between Franklin Street and Van Ness Avenue, Oak Street operates in a westbound

direction only. In the *San Francisco General Plan*, Oak Street is classified as a Major Arterial in the CMP Network and as a part of the MTS Network.

Market Street is a two-way, four-lane arterial that runs between The Embarcadero and Portola Drive in Twin Peaks. In the downtown area, Market Street runs in a northeast-southwest direction. In the vicinity of the project site, Market Street has two to three lanes in each direction, with one lane reserved for transit vehicles only. Market Street is designated as a Transit Conflict Street in the CMP Network, a Transit Preferential Street (transit oriented), a Citywide Pedestrian Network Street and a Neighborhood Commercial Street in the *San Francisco General Plan*. In addition, Market Street is part of Citywide Bicycle Route #50.

Mission Street runs in an east-west direction between The Embarcadero and Van Ness Avenue, and continues in a north-south direction west of Van Ness Avenue. In the vicinity of the project site, Mission Street has two travel lanes in each direction, with 15-foot-wide sidewalks and on-street metered parking along both sides of the street. On-street parking is prohibited during the AM and PM peak periods. Left-turns from Mission Street are generally prohibited between Main/Beale Streets and Tenth Street. Between Fifth Street and South Van Ness Avenue, a transit-only lane is in effect on weekdays from 7:00 to 9:00 AM and from 4:00 to 6:00 PM. In the *San Francisco General Plan*, Mission Street is designated as a Transit Conflict Street in the CMP Network, as a Transit Preferential Street (transit-oriented), a Neighborhood Commercial Street and as a Citywide Pedestrian Network Street.

Laskie Street is a north-south alleyway between Eighth and Ninth Streets that connects with Mission Street. Laskie Street is a 16-foot-wide roadway with five-foot-wide sidewalks, and operates in both directions. On-street parking is not permitted along Laskie Street.

INTERSECTION OPERATING CONDITIONS

The traffic analysis identified eight intersections most likely to be affected by vehicles destined to and from the proposed project. These study intersections include the intersections adjacent to the project site, plus those along the major access routes (see Figure 20, page 79, Transportation Study Intersections).



Source: Wilbur Smith Associates

TRANSPORTATION STUDY AREA FIGURE 20

Intersection operating conditions were evaluated for the weekday PM peak hour (generally between 5:00 and 6:00 PM) of weekday PM peak period (4:00 to 6:00 PM). The eight study intersections are all controlled by traffic signals. Operating characteristics of signalized intersections are described by the concept of Level of Service (LOS). LOS is a qualitative description of an intersection's performance based on the average delay per vehicle. Intersection level of service ranges from LOS A, which indicates free flow or excellent conditions with short delays, to LOS F, which indicates congested or overloaded conditions with extremely long delays. LOS A through D are considered excellent to satisfactory service levels, and LOS E and F represent unacceptable service levels.

The study intersections were evaluated using the *Highway Capacity Manual, 1994 Update (HCM)* methodology.⁴ This methodology determines the capacity for each lane group approaching the intersection. The LOS is then based on the average delay (in seconds per vehicle) for the various movements within the intersection. A combined weighted average delay and LOS is presented for each intersection. In San Francisco, LOS E and F are considered unacceptable operating conditions for signalized intersections.

Table 3 presents the results of the intersection LOS analysis for the existing weekday PM peak hour conditions. As the table indicates, all study intersections currently operate with acceptable conditions (LOS D or better) during the weekday PM peak hour. It should be noted that as a result of the high volume of traffic on Van Ness Avenue in both the northbound (towards the Golden Gate Bridge) and southbound (towards US 101) directions, some queuing and congestion generally occur throughout the evening commute period.

Furthermore, it should be noted that these intersection operating conditions represent typical weekday evening roadway conditions, when some congestion occurs on the regional freeway network (i.e., I-80/Bay Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge). Since Van Ness Avenue is a main route to both the Golden Gate Bridge and the Central Freeway, the roadway has high traffic volumes and high levels of

⁴ As part of the *HCM* methodology, adjustments are typically made to the capacity of each intersection to account for various factors that reduce the ability of the streets to accommodate vehicles (such as the downtown nature of the study area, number of pedestrians, vehicle type, lane widths and queues). These adjustments are performed to ensure that the LOS analysis results reflect the operating conditions that are observed in the field.

congestion in both the northbound and southbound direction. In addition, Hayes Street provides a connection between I-80, downtown and Fell Street, which often results in congestion.

Table 3 Intersection Level of Service Existing Conditions			
Intersection	Control	Delay	LOS
Van Ness / Hayes	Signal	35.0	D
Market / Van Ness	Signal	32.1	D
Market / Tenth	Signal	15.4	C
Market / Ninth	Signal	17.6	C
Market / Eighth	Signal	19.8	C
Mission / Tenth	Signal	22.3	C
Mission / Ninth	Signal	17.7	C
Mission / Eighth	Signal	20.1	C

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates

Note:

Delay presented in seconds per vehicle.

TRANSIT NETWORK

The project site is well-served by public transit, with both local and regional service provided in the nearby vicinity (see Figure 21, page 82, Transit Network). Local service is provided by the San Francisco Municipal Railway (Muni) bus and light rail lines. Service to and from the East Bay is provided by BART, AC Transit and ferries; service to and from the North Bay is provided by Golden Gate Transit buses and ferries; service to and from the Peninsula South Bay is provided by BART, Caltrain and SamTrans.

Local Transit

Muni provides transit service within the City and County of San Francisco, including bus (both diesel and electric trolley), light-rail (Muni Metro), cable car and electric streetcar lines. Muni operates 12 bus lines and six light-rail/streetcar lines within the vicinity of the proposed project within approximately two blocks from the project site. Headways for these lines vary between 6 and 20 minutes during the weekday evening commute period.

The availability of Muni service capacity was analyzed in terms of a series of screenlines. The concept of screenlines is used to describe the magnitude of travel to or from the greater downtown area, and to compare estimated transit volumes to available capacities. Screenlines are hypothetical lines that would be crossed by persons traveling between downtown and its vicinity and other parts of San Francisco and the region.

Four screenlines have been established in San Francisco to analyze potential impacts of projects on Muni service: Northeast, Northwest, Southwest, and Southeast, with sub-corridors within each screenline. The bus and light rail lines used in this screenline analysis are considered the major commute routes from the downtown area. Other bus lines, such as “policy” lines and lines with greater than ten minute headways are not included, due to their generally lower ridership. For the purpose of this analysis, Muni ridership measured at the four San Francisco screenlines and sub-corridors represents the peak direction of travel and patronage loads for the Muni system, which corresponds with the evening commute in the outbound direction from the downtown area to other parts of San Francisco.

Muni has established a capacity utilization standard which includes not only seating capacity but also substantial numbers of standees, with standees representing somewhere between 30 percent to 80 percent of seated passengers, depending upon the specific transit vehicle configuration. Therefore, Muni screenlines and sub-corridors at or near capacity operate under noticeably crowded conditions with many standees. Because each screenline and most sub-corridors include several Muni lines with multiple transit vehicles from each line, some individual transit vehicles operate at or above capacity and are extremely crowded during the PM peak hour at their most heavily used points, while others operate under less crowded conditions. Moreover, the extent of crowding is accentuated whenever target headways are not met through either missed runs and/or bunching in service. Thus, in common with other types of transportation operations such as roadways and parking facilities, transit operators may experience substantial problems in service delivery well short of established service capacity standards.

A total of 21,870 passengers cross the four Muni screenlines during the weekday PM peak hour. These trips are fairly evenly distributed, with approximately 39 percent crossing the northwest screenline, 30 percent crossing the southwest screenline, 15 percent crossing the northeast screenline, and 16 percent crossing the southeast screenline. Capacity utilization of the screenlines is between 73 and 87 percent.

Overall, all screenlines and sub-corridors are currently operating below capacity and have available capacity to accommodate additional passengers.

Regional Transit

BART operates regional rail transit service between the East Bay (from Pittsburg/Bay Point, Richmond, Dublin/Pleasanton and Fremont) and San Francisco, and between northern San Mateo County (Daly City and Colma) and San Francisco. BART has recently extended service to the San Francisco International Airport and Millbrae. Within downtown San Francisco, BART operates underground below Market Street. During the weekday evening commute period, headways are generally 5 to 15 minutes for each line. The nearest BART station to the project site is the Civic Center Station, located about two blocks northwest of the project site.

Caltrain provides rail passenger service on the Peninsula between Gilroy and San Francisco. The San Francisco terminal is located at Fourth and Townsend Streets, in the South of Market area (about one mile east of the project site). Caltrain currently operates 66 trains each weekday, with a combination of express and local service. Headways during the weekday evening commute period are approximately 5 to 30 minutes. It should be noted that Caltrain is currently studying the potential to extend service from the Fourth/Townsend terminal to the Transbay Terminal.

SamTrans, operated by the San Mateo County Transit District, provides bus service between San Mateo County and San Francisco. SamTrans operates 14 bus lines that serve San Francisco, including 12 routes into the downtown area. In general, SamTrans service to downtown San Francisco operates along Mission Street to the Transbay Terminal located between First and Fremont Streets (about 1.5 miles northeast of the project site).

Golden Gate Transit, operated by the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway, and Transportation District (GGBHTD), provides bus service between the North Bay (Marin and Sonoma Counties) and San Francisco. Golden Gate Transit operates 22 commute bus routes, nine basic bus routes and 16 ferry feeder bus routes into San Francisco, several of which are at or near the Transbay Terminal. Basic bus routes operate at regular intervals of 15 to 90 minutes depending on the time and day of week. Commute and ferry feeder bus routes operate at more frequent intervals in the mornings and evenings. Golden

Gate Transit also operates ferry service between the North Bay and San Francisco. During the weekday morning and evening commute periods, ferries are operated between Larkspur and San Francisco, and between Sausalito and San Francisco. The San Francisco terminal is located at the Ferry Building, at The Embarcadero near Market Street (about 1.8 miles northeast of the project site).

AC Transit is the primary bus operator for the East Bay, including Alameda and western Contra Costa Counties. AC Transit operates 37 routes between the East Bay and San Francisco, all of which terminate at the Transbay Terminal. Most transbay service is peak-hour and peak-direction (to San Francisco during the morning commute period and from San Francisco during the evening commute period), with headways of 15 to 30 minutes per route.

A screenline analysis was also performed on the regional transit carriers (AC Transit, BART, Caltrain, Golden Gate Transit and SamTrans), in order to determine the current service volumes and capacity. Three regional screenlines have been established around San Francisco to analyze potential impacts of projects on the regional transit carriers: East Bay, North Bay and South Bay.

For the purpose of the analysis, the ridership and capacity at the three screenlines represents the peak direction of travel and patronage loads, which corresponds with the evening commute in the outbound direction from downtown San Francisco to the region.

As a means to determine the amount of available space for each regional transit provider, capacity utilization is also used. For all regional transit operators, the capacity is based on the number of seated passengers per vehicle. All of the regional transit operators except BART have a one-hour load factor standard of 100 percent, which would indicate that all seats are full. BART has a one-hour load factor standard of 135 percent, which indicates that all seats are full and an additional 35 percent of the seating capacity are standees (i.e., 1.35 passengers per seat).

A total of 31,054 passengers cross the three regional transit screenlines during the weekday PM peak hour. Most of these trips travel to the East Bay (about 69 percent), with lower percentages to the South Bay (19 percent) and North Bay (12 percent). Overall, each screenline and operator are currently

operating at less than their load factor standards, which indicates that seats are generally available and that there is capacity to accommodate additional passengers.

PARKING

The existing off-street parking conditions were examined within a parking study area generally bounded by Seventh Street to the east, Howard Street to the south, Eleventh and Polk Streets to the west, and McAllister Street to the north. The supply and occupancy of public off-street parking facilities were determined for the weekday midday period (generally between 1:30 and 3:00 PM). Parking supply includes the number of both striped and attendant-park spaces. Throughout the study area, there are 16 public parking facilities which provide about 2,858 parking spaces and operate at about 75 percent of capacity during the weekday midday period.

In general, the on-street parking within the vicinity of the project site is comprised of metered spaces, with one-half hour and one-hour limits. In addition, there are several yellow and white loading zones located near businesses. Along several of the nearby streets, on-street parking is prohibited during the weekday AM peak period (7:00 to 9:00 AM) or PM peak period (4:00 to 7:00 PM). In general, on-street parking is generally well-utilized throughout the day. During the weekday midday period, the parking supply is generally completely occupied.

PEDESTRIANS

Adjacent to the project site, sidewalks along Ninth Street are approximately ten feet wide and sidewalks along Market Street are approximately 26 feet wide. South of the project site, sidewalks on Mission Street are approximately 15 feet wide. In the vicinity of the proposed project, pedestrian volumes are moderate – averaging less than 400 pedestrians per hour during the weekday PM peak hour. Overall, the sidewalks and crosswalks were observed to be operating under satisfactory conditions, with pedestrians moving at normal walking speeds and with freedom to bypass other pedestrians. It should be noted that due to congestion, high volume of right-turning and left-turning traffic, transit operations and large intersections due to the wide streets, pedestrians may have difficulty crossing Market Street and Van Ness Avenue. However, pedestrian conditions are still acceptable on these crosswalks.

Pedestrian operating conditions were assessed at the sidewalk immediately adjacent to the proposed project for the weekday PM peak hour conditions using the *2000 Highway Capacity Manual* methodology. Sidewalk operating conditions are measured by pedestrian flow rate, which is defined as the number of pedestrians that pass a specific point on the sidewalk during a certain period (pedestrians per minute per foot or peds/min/foot). The width of the sidewalk at this point is considered the “effective width” which accounts for reduction in amount of sidewalk available for travel due to street furniture and the side of buildings. With the *HCM* methodology, an upper limit for acceptable conditions is LOS D, which equals approximately 15 ped/min/foot. The level of service for sidewalks is calculated for the “platoon” conditions, which represents the conditions when pedestrians are walking together in a group.

The pedestrian level of service condition was calculated at the most restrictive location along the sidewalk adjacent to the project site, which is located immediately north of the driveway to the existing surface parking lot. During the weekday PM peak hour, the existing pedestrian level of service under platoon conditions was LOS C. With these conditions, pedestrians can walk at normal speeds and bypass other pedestrians walking in the same direction, and only minor conflicts occur with pedestrians walking in opposite directions.

BICYCLES

There are several bicycle routes in the vicinity of the proposed project, including: #20 – Grove Street (eastbound) and McAllister Street (westbound); #23 – Seventh Street (northbound) and Eighth Street (southbound); #25 – Eleventh/Larkin/Polk Streets (northbound) and Polk/Tenth Streets (southbound); #30 – Folsom Street (eastbound) and Howard Street (westbound); and #50 – Market Street (eastbound and westbound). In general, during both the weekday midday and evening periods, bicycle conditions were observed to be operating acceptably, with only minor conflicts between bicyclists, pedestrians and vehicles. It should be noted that the bicycle lane on southbound Polk Street ends prior to the intersection with Market Street; however, the bicycle lane on Polk Street is directed into a bicycle channel that allows bicyclists to reach the northwest corner of the intersection of Market/Polk. There is a bicycle lane cut into the bulb/pedestrian island at the Market Street intersection.

Impacts

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The following are the significance criteria used by the Planning Department for the determination of impacts associated with a proposed project:

Intersections

In San Francisco, the threshold for a significant adverse impact on traffic has been established as a deterioration in the level of service (LOS) at a signalized intersection from LOS D or better to LOS E or F, or from LOS E to LOS F. For an intersection that operates at LOS E or F in the existing conditions, there may be a significant adverse impact depending upon the magnitude of the project's contribution to the worsening of delay. In addition, a project would have a significant adverse effect if it would cause major traffic hazards, or would contribute considerably to the cumulative traffic increases that would cause the deterioration in LOS to unacceptable levels (i.e., to LOS E or F).

Parking

Parking supply is not considered to be a part of the permanent physical environment in San Francisco.⁵ Parking conditions are not static conditions, as parking supply and demand varies from day to night, from day to day, month to month, etc. Hence, the availability of parking spaces (or lack thereof) is not a permanent physical condition, but changes over time as people change their modes and patterns of travel. Therefore, parking deficits are considered to be social effects, rather than impacts on the physical environment, as defined by CEQA.

Parking deficits may be associated with secondary physical environmental impacts, such as increased traffic congestion at intersections, air quality or noise effects caused by congestion. However, as noted above, in the experience of San Francisco transportation planners, the absence of a ready supply of parking spaces, combined with available alternatives to auto travel (e.g., transit, taxis, bicycles or walking) and the relatively dense patterns of urban development, may induce drivers to seek and find

⁵ Under *California Public Resources Code*, Section 21060.5, "environment" can be defined as "the physical conditions which exist within the area which will be affected by a proposed project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, noise and objects of historic or aesthetic significance."

alternate parking facilities, shift to other modes of travel or change their overall travel habits. As such, resulting shifts to public transit, in particular, would be in keeping with the City's "transit first" policy.

Additionally, regarding potential secondary effects, auto circling and looking for a parking space in areas of limited parking supply is typically a temporary condition, often offset by a reduction in vehicle trips due to others who are aware of constrained parking conditions in the area. Hence, any secondary environmental impacts which may result from a shortfall in parking in the vicinity of the project would likely be minor and difficult to predict.

Thus, a parking shortage is not considered to be a permanent physical condition and is also not considered to be a physical environmental impact even though it is understood to be an inconvenience to drivers. Therefore, the creation of, or an increase in, parking demand resulting from a project that cannot be met by existing or proposed parking facilities would not itself be considered a significant environmental effect under CEQA. In the absence of such physical environmental impacts, CEQA does not require environmental documents to propose mitigation measures solely because a project is expected to generate parking shortfalls.

Transit

The project would have a significant effect on the environment if it would cause a substantial increase in transit demand that could not be accommodated by adjacent transit capacity, resulting in unacceptable levels of transit service; or cause a substantial increase in operating costs so that significant adverse impacts in transit service levels could result. With the Muni and regional transit screenlines analyses, the project would have a significant effect on the transit provider if project-related transit trips would cause the capacity utilization standard to be exceeded during the weekday PM peak hour.

Pedestrians

The project would have a significant effect on the environment if it would result in substantial overcrowding on public sidewalks, create potentially hazardous conditions for pedestrians, or otherwise interfere with pedestrian accessibility to the site and adjoining areas.

Bicycles

The project would have a significant effect on the environment if it would create potentially hazardous conditions for bicyclists or otherwise substantially interfere with bicycle accessibility to the site and adjoining areas.

Loading

Loading impacts were assessed by comparing the proposed loading space supply to the *Planning Code* requirements and the estimated loading demand during the peak hour of loading activities.

Construction

Construction-related impacts generally would not be considered significant due to their temporary and limited duration.

IMPACT ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

Travel Demand

Travel demand refers to the new vehicle, transit, pedestrian and other traffic that would be generated by the proposed project, plus the demand for parking and freight loading spaces. The travel demand, mode split, trip distribution, parking demand and freight/service vehicle loading demand estimates were based on information contained in the San Francisco Planning Department's *Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines for Environmental Review (SF Guidelines)*, published in October 2002.

Trip Generation

The person-trip generation includes employees and visitors to the proposed office uses, and is based upon daily and weekday PM peak hour trip generation rates (number of trips per 1,000 square feet of use). Overall, the proposed project would generate approximately 4,838 person-trips on a daily basis and 411 person-trips during the weekday PM peak hour. About 8 percent of the weekday PM peak hour trips would be inbound to the site, with about 92 percent of the trips outbound from the site.

Mode Split

The project-generated person-trips were assigned to travel modes in order to determine the number of auto, transit and “other” trips. “Other” includes walk, bicycle, motorcycle, taxi and additional modes. An average vehicle occupancy was applied to the number of auto person-trips to determine the number of vehicle-trips generated by the proposed project. During the weekday PM peak hour, about 33 percent of the trips would be by auto, 58 percent by transit and 9 percent by other modes. The proposed project would generate about 103 vehicle-trips during the weekday PM peak hour, of which 95 percent (97 vehicles) would be outbound from the project site.

Trip Distribution/Assignment

The distribution of trips is based on the origin/destination of each trip, separated into the four quadrants of San Francisco (Superdistricts 1 through 4), East Bay, North Bay, South Bay and Out of Region. Overall, a majority of the trips generated by the proposed project would occur within San Francisco (about 56 percent) and to and from the East Bay (24 percent), with smaller percentages to and from other areas (20 percent in total). These distributional patterns were used as the basis for assigning the project-generated vehicle trips to the local streets in the study area, and the transit trips to the local and regional transit operators.

Parking Demand

Parking demand consists of long-term demand (typically employees) and short-term demand (typically visitors). The long-term parking demand was derived by estimating the number of employees and applying the mode split and average vehicle occupancy rates from the trip generation calculations. The short-term parking demand was estimated based on the total daily visitor trips and an average turnover rate. Overall, the proposed project would have a parking demand for 304 spaces, including 260 long-term spaces and 44 short-term spaces.

Loading Demand

Freight delivery and service vehicle demand was estimated based on the methodology and truck trip generation rates presented in the *SF Guidelines*. Overall, the proposed project would generate approximately 56 delivery/service vehicle trips per day. This would correspond to a demand for about 2.6 loading spaces during an average hour, and about 3.2 loading spaces during the peak hour of loading

activities. It is anticipated that most of the delivery/service vehicles that would be generated by the proposed project would consist of small trucks and vans to the office uses.

EXISTING PLUS PROJECT CONDITIONS

Traffic Impacts

The proposed project would generate 6 inbound and 97 outbound vehicle-trips during the weekday PM peak hour. Table 4 on page 92 presents a comparison of the Existing and Existing Plus Project intersection levels of service for the weekday PM peak hour. In general, the addition of project-generated traffic would result in minor increases in the average delay per vehicle at the study intersections and all intersections would continue to operate at the same service levels as under the Existing conditions.

Table 4 Intersection Level of Service Existing plus Project Conditions				
	Existing		Existing Plus Project	
	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS
Van Ness / Hayes	35.0	D	35.7	D
Market / Van Ness	32.1	D	33.7	D
Market / Tenth	15.4	C	15.5	C
Market / Ninth	17.6	C	18.2	C
Market / Eighth	19.8	C	19.9	C
Mission / Tenth	22.3	C	23.3	C
Mission / Ninth	17.7	C	18.2	C
Mission / Eighth	20.1	C	20.5	C

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates

Notes:

Delay presented in seconds per vehicle.

In the immediate vicinity of the project site, the transit lines generally have available capacity during the weekday PM peak hour that could be used to accommodate the inbound and outbound transit trips generated by the proposed project. In addition, it is anticipated that many people would walk to Market Street to access the bus lines or Muni Metro at the Civic Center Station (instead of taking a bus and transferring).

Muni Screenlines

The analysis of Muni screenlines assesses the effect of project-generated transit-trips on transit conditions in the outbound direction during the weekday PM peak hour. Based on the origins/destinations of the transit trips generated by the proposed project, the outbound transit trips within San Francisco were assigned to the four screenlines and the sub-corridors within each screenline. Overall, the addition of the project-generated riders to the four screenlines would not substantially increase the peak hour capacity utilization. Capacity utilization for all screenlines would remain similar to those under Existing conditions, and all screenlines and sub-corridors would continue to operate at less than capacity.

Regional Transit Screenlines

Similar to the analysis of Muni, the analysis of regional transit screenlines assesses the effect of project-generated transit-trips on transit conditions in the outbound direction during the weekday PM peak hour. Based on the origins/destinations of the transit trips generated by the proposed project, the outbound regional transit trips were assigned to the three regional transit screenlines. It was estimated that 70 transit trips would be destined to the East Bay, 6 to the North Bay and 17 to the South Bay during the weekday PM peak hour. Overall, the addition of project-related passengers would not have a substantial effect on the regional transit providers during the weekday PM peak hour, as the capacity utilization for all screenlines would remain similar to those under Existing conditions. In addition, the capacity utilization for all regional transit providers would be under their capacity utilization standards.

Parking Impacts

The San Francisco *Planning Code* does not require the proposed project to provide off-street parking (office uses in the C-3 District are not required to supply parking). However, the proposed project would be able to provide parking under the accessory parking and replacement parking provisions. Overall, the proposed project would be permitted to provide up to 155 parking spaces (53 accessory spaces and

102 replacement spaces).⁶ Since the proposed project would provide 134 parking spaces, it would be in conformity with the *Planning Code* requirements.

The proposed project would generate a total parking demand for about 304 spaces, of which 260 would be long-term demand, and 44 would be short-term demand. Since the proposed project would provide 134 parking spaces, it would not accommodate the entire parking demand and would result in a shortfall of 170 spaces. However, the existing parking facilities in the study area currently operate at an average of 75 percent occupancy rate and would therefore be able to accommodate the proposed project's parking shortfall of 170 spaces.

The development of the proposed project would displace the existing public parking facility on the site, resulting in the elimination of about 173 parking spaces (138 striped and 35 attendant-park spaces). The reduction in parking supply would require some of the drivers who currently park at this facility to park elsewhere in the surrounding area (some of the users of the existing lot would be allowed to park in the proposed project garage). Currently, the public off-street parking facilities are operating at an average of 75 percent of capacity during the weekday midday period with 724 spaces available; as such, there would be sufficient capacity to accommodate the displaced vehicles.

Pedestrian Impacts

Pedestrian trips generated by the proposed project would include primary walk trips, plus walk trips to and from the local and regional transit operators and nearby parking facilities. Overall, the proposed project would add about 250 pedestrian trips to the surrounding streets during the weekday PM peak hour. These new pedestrian trips could be accommodated on the existing sidewalk and crosswalks adjacent to the project site and would not substantially affect the current pedestrian conditions along both Ninth Street and Market Street. As the sidewalk on Ninth Street currently has relatively low

⁶ For accessory parking, §204.5(c) of the *Planning Code* allows for the provision of the number of parking spaces that could be accommodated within the equivalent of 7.0 percent of the gross square footage of the project, which would result in 53 parking spaces (267,300 gsf of project land uses x 7.0% = 18,711 sq ft = 53 parking spaces). In addition, the project sponsor would seek to establish replacement parking under §309 of the *Planning Code*. For replacement parking, the *Planning Code* allows for the provision of the number of parking spaces that could be accommodated with the square footage of the parking eliminated with the project, which would result in 102 parking spaces (35,900 square feet of displaced parking = 102 parking spaces).

pedestrian activity during the weekday PM peak hour, pedestrian conditions would continue to remain acceptable (LOS C).

Bicycle Impacts

Since the proposed project would provide 41 bicycle parking spaces, four showers and eight clothes lockers, it would meet the San Francisco *Planning Code* requirements for the provision of bicycle spaces and showers/lockers.⁷

The project site is within convenient bicycling distance of downtown San Francisco and the Financial District. As such, a portion of the “other” trips generated by the proposed project are anticipated to be bicycle trips. As previously noted, there are several bicycle routes nearby the project site (including along Polk, Howard and Market Streets). With the current bicycle and traffic volumes on the adjacent streets, bicycle travel generally occurs without major impedances or safety problems. The proposed project would result in an increase in the number of vehicles in the vicinity of the project site; however, this increase would not be substantial enough to affect bicycle travel in the area.

Loading Impacts

The proposed project would provide an off-street loading bay with four spaces, to be located within the first level of the garage. Overall, the proposed project would meet the San Francisco *Planning Code* requirements for three loading docks and the minimum size for the off-street loading facilities.⁸ In addition, since the proposed project would generate a demand for 2.6 loading spaces during an average hour, and 3.2 spaces during the peak hour of loading activities, the proposed loading supply would accommodate the anticipated demand.

⁷ Per §155.2(c) and §155.3(c) of the San Francisco *Planning Code*, the proposed project would be required to provide seven bicycle parking spaces, four showers and eight lockers.

⁸ A width of 10 feet, a length of 25 feet, and a vertical clearance, including entry and exit, of 12 feet (Section 154(b)). The proposed project’s four spaces would exceed these dimensions.

To accommodate garbage pick-ups, the proposed project would provide a separate garbage/trash area including a compactor and recycling facilities, to be located adjacent to the loading bay in the center of the building. Garbage trucks would enter from Ninth Street and exit to Laskie Street.

Operations of the proposed project's loading dock would not substantially affect pedestrian and vehicular access and circulation. The service/delivery vehicles would enter the proposed project at Ninth Street and exit to Laskie Street, avoiding the need to maneuver the vehicle on Ninth Street where the potential for conflicts with pedestrian and vehicular traffic would be greatest.

Loading dock operations were observed at the existing SCIF office building located immediately north of the project site at 1275 Market Street during the weekday AM peak period. During this period, seven service/delivery vehicles were observed entering the building, including two vans, one small truck, and three medium-sized trucks. Overall, vehicles entering the loading dock were observed to cause minimal delays of vehicular traffic on Ninth Street. The minor delays caused by loading dock operations on Ninth Street did not substantially affect the entrance or exit of pedestrians and vehicles of the proposed project. It should be noted that the consolidation of loading operations of the proposed project and the existing SCIF building would allow the larger vehicles currently loading on Ninth Street to use the new off-street loading facilities provided by the proposed project

Construction Impacts

It is anticipated that construction of the proposed project would take approximately 22 months. Detailed plans for construction activities have not yet been finalized; however, there would be five primary construction phases: Demolition and Site Clearing (1 month); Excavation, grading and shoring (2 months); Foundation and basement construction (2 months); Superstructure erection (5 months); and Exterior skin and Interior and Exterior and finishing (12 months). Construction-related activities would typically occur Monday through Friday, between 7:00 AM and 3:30 PM. To avoid potential conflict with peak hour traffic, it is recommended the truck movements be limited to the hours between 9:00 AM and 3:30 PM. It is anticipated that construction activities on weekends would only occur on an as-needed basis, and would not occur on Sundays between 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM due to surrounding land uses.

Construction staging would occur primarily within the site and from the adjacent sidewalks on Ninth and Laskie Streets. It is anticipated that the sidewalk along the proposed project frontage on Ninth Street would be closed throughout the construction duration, and a temporary pedestrian walkway would be established in the adjacent parking lane. It should be noted that this parking lane is a tow-away lane during the evening commute period (which allows for an additional travel lane on Ninth Street). As such, during this time, there would be one less travel lane on Ninth Street for the length of the project site.⁹ No regular travel lanes on Ninth Street would need to be closed for construction.

If it is determined that other temporary traffic lane closures would be needed, they would be coordinated with the City in order to minimize the impacts on local traffic. In general, lane and sidewalk closures are subject to review and approval by the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Interdepartmental Staff Committee on Traffic and Transportation (ISCOTT). Since there are no Muni bus stops along the project site frontage, it is not anticipated that any Muni bus stops would need to be relocated during construction of the project.

Throughout the construction period, there would be a flow of construction-related trucks into and out of the site. The impact of construction truck traffic would be a temporary lessening of the capacities of local streets due to the slower movement and larger turning radii of trucks, which may affect both traffic and transit operations. The maximum number of truck trips would be 300 per day during the pouring of the foundation and an average of 80 trips a day throughout the excavation phase. During all other phases, there would be an average of 10 to 35 truck trips per day.

It is anticipated that a majority of the construction-related truck traffic would use I-80/US 101 and I-280 to access the project site from the East Bay and South Bay. For access between the project site and the East Bay, trucks would be routed to the site from I-80 westbound via Eighth Street off-ramp to Harrison Street and Ninth Street, and would return to I-80 eastbound from Harrison Street to the First Street on-

⁹ It should be noted that the replacement facility for the Fell Street exit from the Central Freeway (Octavia Boulevard) will not be functional until 2005 or 2006. The Transportation Management Plan (TMP) for the Central Freeway during this period calls for extended tow-away hours for the parking lane. Closing the lane 24 hours a day to allow for temporary pedestrian walkway for the length of the project site during construction may conflict with the Central Freeway TMP. The project sponsor and construction contractors would meet with City staff to address concerns that may arise.

ramp. For access between the project site and the South Bay, trucks would be routed from I-280 northbound to the site via the Sixth Street off-ramp to Harrison Street and Ninth Street, and would return to I-280 southbound at the Brannan/Sixth Street on-ramp.

There would be an average of 50 and a maximum of 200 construction workers per day at the project site. The trip distribution and mode split of construction workers are not known. However, it is anticipated that the addition of the worker-related vehicle or transit trips would not substantially affect transportation conditions, as any impacts on local intersections or the transit network would be similar to, or less than, those associated with the proposed project. Construction workers who drive to the site would cause a temporary parking demand. Since the nearby parking facilities currently have some availability during the day, it is anticipated that construction workers could be accommodated without substantially affecting area-wide parking conditions.

2020 CUMULATIVE CONDITIONS

Methodology

The San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) countywide travel demand forecasting model (SFCTA Model) was used to develop the travel forecasts for cumulative development and growth through the years 2020 in the region, as well as to determine travel demand to and from the South of Market area (area roughly bounded by The Embarcadero, Market Street, South Van Ness Avenue and King Street). This approach results in a cumulative impact assessment for year 2020 conditions that takes into account both the future development expected in the South of Market area, as well as the expected growth in housing and employment for the remainder of San Francisco and the nine-county Bay Area.

The SFCTA Model was used to develop the future traffic volumes (at each study intersection) and the future local transit ridership. However, since the SFCTA Model focuses on trips that start and end within San Francisco, future ridership forecasts for the regional transit operators was based on information received from the individual service providers.

No major changes have been identified to the roadways within the study area that would affect local circulation and intersection operating conditions. The only major transit improvements identified to occur by 2020 that would affect transit service in San Francisco are the Third Street Light Rail Project and the BART extension to the San Francisco Airport and Millbrae, which were incorporated into the transit analyses.

Traffic Impacts

Under 2020 Cumulative conditions (see Table 5 on page 99), four of the eight study intersections would operate with unacceptable conditions (LOS E or F) during the weekday PM peak hour. The intersections of Van Ness/Hayes and Market/Van Ness would worsen from LOS D to LOS E due to the anticipated increase in traffic along Van Ness Avenue in the future. In addition, the intersection of Mission/Ninth would worsen from LOS C to LOS E and the intersection of Mission/Eighth would worsen from LOS C to LOS F, as a result of the substantial increase in traffic generated by the proposed redevelopment in the Mid-Market area. The other four study intersections would continue to operate with acceptable conditions (LOS D or better).

Table 5 Intersection Level of Service 2020 Cumulative Conditions					
Intersection	Existing		2020 Cumulative		
	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	v/c
Van Ness / Hayes	35.0	D	52.0	E	1.10
Market / Van Ness	32.1	D	53.2	E	1.10
Market / Tenth	15.4	C	17.3	C	-
Market / Ninth	17.6	C	38.3	D	-
Market / Eighth	19.8	C	26.9	D	-
Mission / Tenth	22.3	C	27.5	D	-
Mission / Ninth	17.7	C	>60	E	1.10
Mission / Eighth	20.1	C	>60	F	0.90

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates

Note:

Delay presented in seconds per vehicle.

v/c (volume to capacity) ratio presented for all intersections operating at LOS E or F.

To assess the effect of project-generated traffic on 2020 Cumulative conditions, the proposed project's percent contribution to the 2020 Cumulative traffic volumes was determined. Two different percent contributions were calculated: the project-generated traffic as a percent of total 2020 Cumulative traffic volumes at intersections that would operate at LOS E or F in 2020, and the project-generated traffic as a percent of only the increase in traffic volumes between Existing and 2020 Cumulative conditions.

As shown in Table 6 below, the proposed project would have a relatively small contribution to the total 2020 Cumulative traffic volumes (between 0.2 and 0.3 percent). The proposed project's contribution to the growth in traffic volumes between Existing and 2020 Cumulative conditions would be between 1.2 and 4.2 percent.

Table 6					
Proposed Project's Contribution to Traffic Volumes					
Intersection	Existing Volume	Project Volume	2020 Cumulative Volume	Contribution to Total 2020 Cumulative Volume	Contribution to Growth in Volumes
Van Ness / Hayes	5,321	15	5,768	0.3%	3.4%
Market / Van Ness	4,662	17	5,069	0.3%	4.2%
Mission / Ninth	4,596	15	5,478	0.3%	1.7%
Mission / Eighth	3,523	10	4,348	0.2%	1.2%

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates

Under the 2020 Cumulative conditions, there would be significant cumulative traffic impacts due to anticipated background traffic growth which would cause the intersections of Van Ness/Hayes and Van Ness/Market to worsen from LOS D to LOS E, the intersection of Mission/Ninth to worsen from LOS C to LOS E, and the intersection of Mission/Eighth to worsen from LOS C to LOS F during the weekday PM peak hour. However, the proposed project's contribution to the total intersection volumes at these locations would not be considerable; therefore, the proposed project would not be considered to have a significant impact.

While not required to mitigate project-generated impacts, it would be possible to improve weekday PM peak hour operating conditions at the intersections of Mission/Ninth and Mission/Eighth by increasing

the cycle lengths from 60 seconds to 90 seconds. Since other nearby intersections, including Mission/Tenth, already have 90 second cycles, the increase in cycle length would not substantially affect area circulation. With this change, the intersections of Mission/Ninth and Mission/Eighth would improve to LOS D and LOS C, respectively. These changes to the cycle length would be coordinated by the San Francisco Department of Parking and Traffic to ensure compatibility with traffic operations in the area.

At the two Van Ness Avenue intersections, traffic conditions would worsen due to the anticipated increase in traffic along Van Ness Avenue in the future. In addition, there would be increases in traffic volumes along the major east-west streets, including Market Street and Hayes Street. As such, it would not be possible to improve conditions by adjusting the signal timing, and no geometric changes are possible. It should be noted that as a result of the future increases in traffic destined to and from the US 101 on- and off-ramps at Mission/South Van Ness, congestion and queuing along Van Ness Avenue would worsen which would negatively affect intersection performance. However, as discussed above, the proposed project's contribution the total intersection volumes at these locations would not be significant.

Transit Impacts

Between Existing and 2020 Cumulative conditions, ridership demand at the four Muni screenlines is projected to increase by about 4,520 passengers (22 percent), while capacity is projected to increase by about 3,600 passengers (14 percent). Although the projected ridership is expected to approach capacity at all screenlines, only the Southeast screenline would operate at capacity. At this location, the proposed project would add 51 transit trips and would contribute 3.4 percent to the growth in ridership demand between the Existing and 2020 Cumulative conditions. Since this contribution would be minimal, the proposed project would not have a significant contribution to the 2020 Cumulative conditions.

Between Existing and 2020 Cumulative conditions, ridership demand at the three regional transit screenlines is projected to increase by about 10,560 passengers at the East Bay screenline (72 percent), by about 1,130 passengers at the North Bay screenline (42 percent), and by about 6,340 passengers at the South Bay screenline (233 percent). At the South Bay screenline, a substantial increase in BART ridership would be generated by the new extension to the San Francisco Airport and Millbrae. Overall, each regional transit operator would continue to operate at less than their load factor standards, except

BART to the South Bay. At this location, the proposed project would add 9 transit trips and contribute less than 0.1 percent to the growth in ridership demand between Existing and 2020 Cumulative conditions. Since this contribution would be minimal, the proposed project would not have a significant contribution to the 2020 Cumulative conditions.

E. GROWTH INDUCEMENT

In general, a project would be considered growth-inducing if its implementation would result in substantial population increases and/or new development that might not occur if the project were not approved and implemented. The proposed project would replace an existing surface parking lot with an office building. This would intensify the use of the site, but would not be expected to substantially alter development patterns in the Mid-Market area or elsewhere in San Francisco. The project site is in an urbanized area that is intensively developed and that already supports substantial amounts of government office, residential, hotel, retail, commercial, institutional, and restaurant uses in surrounding blocks.

The addition of 268,000 gross square feet of office space would increase the daily population on the project site by approximately 1,200 employees.¹ Some of these would be SCIF employees relocated from other locations in downtown San Francisco. In addition to employees who would be relocated from these other locations when the proposed project is completed, SCIF projects a total of 444 new positions in the first year of operation, and another 570 positions over the next five years. Many of the 1,200 relocated and new SCIF employees accommodated at the project site would already be living in the City. Others would come from outside San Francisco, and may seek housing within the City boundaries. The number of employees relocating from outside San Francisco would be small in proportion to San Francisco's population, and would not represent a substantial growth in population or concentration in the neighborhood, City, or region.

The proposed project is located in an urban area and would not necessitate or induce the extension of municipal infrastructure. In view of the above, there is no evidence to suggest that the project would result in additional development in the project site vicinity that would not otherwise occur.

¹ Jim True, Real Property Manager, State Compensation Insurance Fund, telephone conversation, February 14, 2002.

IV. MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED TO MINIMIZE THE POTENTIAL ADVERSE IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

Pursuant to CEQA, for each significant impact identified in the EIR, the EIR must discuss feasible measures to avoid or substantially reduce the project's significant effects. Some of the mitigation measures discussed in this EIR that would avoid or reduce significant environmental effects have been adopted by the project sponsor and, therefore, are proposed as part of the project. Some measures would require implementation by public agencies. Section A, below, contains those mitigation measures identified in this EIR as necessary to mitigate significant environmental effects. Mitigation measures identified in this EIR would be required by the Planning Commission as conditions of project approval unless they are demonstrated to be infeasible based on substantial evidence in the record. Section B identifies measures proposed to improve project effects that would not be considered significant impacts.

Several items are required by law that would serve to mitigate impacts. These include a limitation on construction noise (*San Francisco Noise Ordinance*, Article 29 of the *San Francisco Police Code*, 1972); a prohibition on the use of mirrored glass on the building (City Planning Commission Resolution No. 9212); and protective measures against lead-based paint exposure (Chapter 36 of the San Francisco Building Code, Work Practices for Exterior Lead-Based Paint). The project sponsor and construction contractors would also be required to observe all state and federal OSHA safety requirements related to handling and disposal of other hazardous materials, such as asbestos.

The mitigation measures identified in this EIR follow.

A. MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED AS PART OF THE PROJECT

Construction Air Quality

The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) to spray the project site with water during demolition, excavation, grading, and site preparation activities; spray unpaved construction areas with water at least twice per day; cover stockpiles of soil, sand, and other such material; cover trucks hauling debris, soils, sand or other such material; and sweep surrounding streets during these periods at least once per day to reduce particulate emissions. Ordinance 175-91, passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, the project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) to obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose.

The project sponsor shall require the project contractor(s) to maintain and operate construction equipment so as to minimize exhaust emissions of particulates and other pollutants, by such means as prohibiting idling motors when equipment is not in use or when trucks are waiting in queues, and implementing specific maintenance programs to reduce emissions for equipment that would be in frequent use for much of the construction period.

Hazards (Underground Storage Tanks)

The project sponsor shall evaluate the presence of the suspected UST located at the entrance to the existing parking lot on the site. If a UST is found, it shall be removed by the project sponsor, and all work shall be conducted in accordance with regulatory requirements. In the case a UST is found, surrounding soils shall be tested, and any soil found to be contaminated at or above potentially hazardous levels shall be handled and disposed in accordance with the Mitigation Measure for Hazards (Contaminated Soil), below.

Hazards (Contaminated Soil)

Step 1: Preparation of Site Mitigation Plan

If, based on the results of the soil tests conducted, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) determines that the soils on the project site are contaminated with lead or other contaminants at or above potentially hazardous levels, the DPH shall determine if preparation of a Site Mitigation Plan (SMP) is warranted. If such a plan is requested by the DPH, the SMP shall include a discussion of the level of contamination of soils on the project site and mitigation measures for managing contaminated soils on the site, including, but not limited to: 1) the alternatives for managing contaminated soils on the site (e.g., encapsulation, partial or complete removal, treatment, recycling for reuse, or a combination); 2) the preferred alternative for managing contaminated soils on the site and a brief justification; and 3) the specific practices to be used to handle, haul, and dispose of contaminated soils on the site. The SMP shall be

submitted to the DPH for review and approval. A copy of the SMP shall be submitted to the Planning Department to become part of the case file.

Step 2: Handling, Hauling, and Disposal of Contaminated Soils

- (a) specific work practices: If based on the results of the soil tests conducted, DPH determines that the soils on the project site are contaminated with lead or other contaminants at or above potentially hazardous levels, the construction contractor shall be alert for the presence of such soils during excavation and other construction activities on the site (detected through soil odor, color, and texture and results of on-site soil testing), and shall be prepared to handle, profile (i.e., characterize), and dispose of such soils appropriately (i.e., as dictated by local, state, and federal regulations, including OSHA lead-safe work practices) when such soils are encountered on the site.
- (b) dust suppression: Soils exposed during excavation for site preparation and project construction activities shall be kept moist throughout the time they are exposed, both during and after work hours.
- (c) surface water runoff control: Where soils are stockpiled, visqueen shall be used to create an impermeable liner, both beneath and on top of the soils, with a berm to contain any potential surface water runoff from the soil stockpiles during inclement weather.
- (d) soils replacement: If necessary, clean fill or other suitable material(s) shall be used to bring portions of the project site, where contaminated soils have been excavated and removed, up to construction grade.
- (e) hauling and disposal: Contaminated soils shall be hauled off the project site by waste hauling trucks appropriately certified with the State of California and adequately covered to prevent dispersion of the soils during transit, and shall be disposed of at a permitted hazardous waste disposal facility registered with the State of California.

Step 3: Preparation of Closure/Certification Report

After excavation and foundation construction activities are completed, the project sponsor shall prepare and submit a closure/certification report to DPH for review and approval. The closure/certification report shall include the mitigation measures in the SMP for handling and removing contaminated soils from the project site, whether the construction contractor modified any of these mitigation measures, and how and why the construction contractor modified those mitigation measures.

Cultural Resources

Based on a reasonable presumption that archeological resources may be present within the project site, the following measures shall be undertaken to avoid any potentially significant adverse effect from the proposed project on buried or submerged historical resources. The project sponsor shall retain the services of a qualified archeological consultant having expertise in California prehistoric and urban historical archeology. The archeological consultant shall

undertake an archeological testing program as specified herein. In addition, the consultant shall be available to conduct an archeological monitoring and/or data recovery program if required pursuant to this measure. The archeological consultant's work shall be conducted in accordance with this measure at the direction of the Environmental Review Officer (ERO). All plans and reports prepared by the consultant as specified herein shall be submitted first and directly to the ERO for review and comment, and shall be considered draft reports subject to revision until final approval by the ERO. Archeological monitoring and/or data recovery programs required by this measure could suspend construction of the project for up to a maximum of four weeks. At the direction of the ERO, the suspension of construction can be extended beyond four weeks only if such a suspension were the only feasible means to reduce to a less than significant level potential effects on a significant archeological resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15064.5 (a)(c).

Archeological Testing Program. The archeological consultant shall prepare and submit to the ERO for review and approval an archeological testing plan (ATP). The archeological testing program shall be conducted in accordance with the approved ATP. The ATP shall identify the property types of the expected archeological resource(s) that potentially could be adversely affected by the proposed project, the testing method to be used, and the locations recommended for testing. The purpose of the archeological testing program will be to determine to the extent possible the presence or absence of archeological resources and to identify and to evaluate *as an historical resource* any archeological resource presumed to be within the site.

- At the completion of the archeological testing program, the archeological consultant shall submit a written report of the findings to the ERO. If based on the archeological testing program the archeological consultant finds that significant archeological resources may be present, the ERO in consultation with the archeological consultant shall determine if additional measures are warranted. Additional measures that may be undertaken include additional archeological testing, archeological monitoring, and/or an archeological data recovery program. If the ERO determines that a significant archeological resource were present and that the resource could be adversely affected by the proposed project, at the discretion of the project sponsor either:
 - A. The proposed project shall be re-designed so as to avoid any adverse effect on the significant archeological resource; or
 - B. A data recovery program shall be implemented, unless the ERO determines that the archeological resource is of greater interpretive than research significance and that interpretive use of the resource is feasible.

Archeological Monitoring Program. If the ERO in consultation with the archeological consultant determines that an archeological monitoring program shall be implemented the archeological monitoring program shall minimally include the following provisions:

- The archeological consultant, project sponsor, and ERO shall meet and consult on the scope of the AMP reasonably prior to any project-related soils disturbing activities commencing. The ERO in consultation with the archeological consultant shall

determine what project activities shall be archeologically monitored. In most cases, any soils-disturbing activities, such as demolition, foundation removal, excavation, grading, utilities installation, foundation work, driving of piles (foundation, shoring, etc.), site remediation, etc., shall require archeological monitoring because of the risk these activities pose to potential archaeological resources and to their depositional context;

- The archeological consultant shall advise all project contractors to be on the alert for evidence of the presence of the expected resource(s), of how to identify the evidence of the expected resource(s), and of the appropriate protocol in the event of apparent discovery of an archeological resource;
- The archeological monitor(s) shall be present on the project site according to a schedule agreed upon by the archeological consultant and the ERO until the ERO has, in consultation with project archeological consultant, determined that project construction activities could have no effects on significant archeological deposits;
- The archeological monitor shall record and be authorized to collect soil samples and artifactual/ecofactual material as warranted for analysis;

If an intact archeological deposit is encountered, all soils-disturbing activities in the vicinity of the deposit shall cease. The archeological monitor shall be empowered to temporarily redirect demolition/excavation/pile driving/construction activities and equipment until the deposit is evaluated. If in the case of pile driving activity (foundation, shoring, etc.), the archeological monitor has cause to believe that the pile driving activity may affect an archeological resource, the pile driving activity shall be terminated until an appropriate evaluation of the resource has been made in consultation with the ERO. The archeological consultant shall immediately notify the ERO of the encountered archeological deposit. The archeological consultant shall make a reasonable effort to assess the identity, integrity, and significance of the encountered archeological deposit, and present the findings of this assessment to the ERO.

Whether or not significant archeological resources are encountered, the archeological consultant shall submit a written report of the findings of the monitoring program to the ERO.

Archeological Data Recovery Program. The archeological data recovery program shall be conducted in accord with an archeological data recovery plan (ADRP). The archeological consultant, project sponsor, and ERO shall meet and consult on the scope of the ADRP prior to preparation of a draft ADRP. The archeological consultant shall submit a draft ADRP to the ERO. The ADRP shall identify how the proposed data recovery program will preserve the significant information the archeological resource is expected to contain. That is, the ADRP will identify what scientific/historical research questions are applicable to the expected resource, what data classes the resource is expected to possess, and how the expected data classes would address the applicable research questions. Data recovery, in general, should be limited to the portions of the historical property that could be adversely affected by the proposed project. Destructive data recovery methods shall not be applied to portions of the archeological resources if nondestructive methods are practical.

The scope of the ADRP shall include the following elements:

- *Field Methods and Procedures.* Descriptions of proposed field strategies, procedures, and operations.
- *Cataloguing and Laboratory Analysis.* Description of selected cataloguing system and artifact analysis procedures.
- *Discard and Deaccession Policy.* Description of and rationale for field and post-field discard and deaccession policies.
- *Interpretive Program.* Consideration of an on-site/off-site public interpretive program during the course of the archeological data recovery program.
- *Security Measures.* Recommended security measures to protect the archeological resource from vandalism, looting, and non-intentionally damaging activities.
- *Final Report.* Description of proposed report format and distribution of results.
- *Curation.* Description of the procedures and recommendations for the curation of any recovered data having potential research value, identification of appropriate curation facilities, and a summary of the accession policies of the curation facilities.

Human Remains and Associated or Unassociated Funerary Objects. The treatment of human remains and of associated or unassociated funerary objects discovered during any soils disturbing activity shall comply with applicable State and Federal laws. This shall include immediate notification of the Coroner of the City and County of San Francisco and in the event of the Coroner's determination that the human remains are Native American remains, notification of the California State Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) who shall appoint a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) (Pub. Res. Code Sec. 5097.98). The archeological consultant, project sponsor, and MLD shall make all reasonable efforts to develop an agreement for the treatment of, with appropriate dignity, human remains and associated or unassociated funerary objects (CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15064.5(d)). The agreement should take into consideration the appropriate excavation, removal, recordation, analysis, custodianship, curation, and final disposition of the human remains and associated or unassociated funerary objects.

Final Archeological Resources Report. The archeological consultant shall submit a Draft Final Archeological Resources Report (FARR) to the ERO that evaluates the historical significance of any discovered archeological resource and describes the archeological and historical research methods employed in the archeological testing/monitoring/data recovery program(s) undertaken. Information that may put at risk any archeological resource shall be provided in a separate removable insert within the final report.

Once approved by the ERO, copies of the FARR shall be distributed as follows: California Archaeological Site Survey Northwest Information Center (NWIC) shall receive one (1) copy and the ERO shall receive a copy of the transmittal of the FARR to the NWIC. The Major Environmental Analysis division of the Planning Department shall receive three copies of the FARR along with copies of any formal site recordation forms (CA DPR 523 series) and/or documentation for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places/California Register of Historical Resources. In instances of high public interest in or the high interpretive value of

the resource, the ERO may require a different final report content, format, and distribution than that presented above.

B. IMPROVEMENT MEASURES

Improvement measures diminish effects of the project that were found through the environmental analysis to be less-than-significant impacts. The cost of the first, second and third measures would be borne by the project sponsor, and the fourth measure would be implemented by the Department of Parking and Traffic.

Wind

Installation of durable street trees that would mature to a large size along the Ninth Street sidewalk adjacent to the project site would noticeably reduce wind speeds that occur in pedestrian areas. Street trees would reduce wind speeds but would not necessarily provide sufficient reductions to eliminate the two new exceedances of the pedestrian-comfort criterion or the two new exceedances of the wind hazard criterion generated by the proposed project.

Geology/Topography

The project sponsor shall incorporate the recommendations in the conclusions of the Geotechnical Investigation Report on the project site.

Noise

No construction activities would occur on Sundays from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM due to surrounding land uses.

Transportation

To improve operating conditions at the intersections of Mission/Ninth and Mission/Eighth during the weekday PM peak hour, the cycle lengths could be increased from 60 seconds to 90 seconds. Since other nearby intersections, including Mission/Tenth, already have 90 second cycles, the increase in cycle length would not substantially affect area circulation. With this change, the intersections of Mission/Ninth and Mission/Eighth would improve to LOS D and LOS C, respectively. These changes to the cycle length would be coordinated by the San Francisco Department of Parking and Traffic to ensure compatibility with traffic operations in the area.

V. SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED IF THE PROJECT IS IMPLEMENTED

In accordance with Section 21100(b)(2)(A) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and with Section 15126.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the purpose of this chapter is to identify environmental impacts that could not be eliminated or reduced to an insignificant level by mitigation measures included as part of the proposed project, or by other mitigation measures that could be implemented, as described in Chapter IV, Mitigation Measures, pages 103 through 109. This chapter is subject to final determination by the City Planning Commission as part of its certification of the EIR. The Final EIR will be revised, if necessary, to reflect the findings of the Commission.

No significant project-specific impacts have been identified. With implementation of the mitigation measures outlined in Chapter IV, Mitigation Measures, all potential adverse impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. Improvement measures are also included and would further reduce the environmental effects. The project sponsor has agreed to implement all measures in Chapter IV (except for those requiring public agency responsibility) in an agreement dated December 11, 2003.¹

Whether or not the project is approved, traffic volumes and transit loading in the site vicinity are projected to increase. Cumulative increases in traffic congestion may in turn cause cumulative increases in criteria air pollutants and a degradation of air quality. The project's incremental contribution to these potential cumulative effects would not be considered to be "considerable" or significant.

¹ This mitigation agreement is available by appointment for public review at the San Francisco Planning Department, 1600 Mission Street, fifth floor, in Case File No. 2001.1039E.

VI. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

This chapter identifies alternatives to the proposed project and discusses environmental impacts associated with each alternative. Project decision-makers could adopt any of the following alternatives instead of the proposed project, if an alternative would reduce or eliminate significant environmental impacts of the project and is determined to be feasible and would attain most of the basic objectives of the project. This determination of feasibility will be made by project decision-makers on the basis of substantial evidence in the record which shall include, but not be limited to, information presented in this EIR and comments received on the Draft EIR.

Alternatives were selected that would reduce identified impacts of the proposed project. The following alternatives are evaluated: a No-Project Alternative and a Code-Compliant Alternative. The Code Compliant Alternative would consist of a smaller office building that would comply with existing zoning, height, bulk, and FAR restrictions, including the 120-foot height limit. Other alternatives, with a variety of configurations, could also be considered by decision-makers, provided the proposed uses are similar to those analyzed in the proposed project or the alternatives. Other uses for the project site are not considered, as the project sponsor only intends to build and operate an expansion of their existing San Francisco office, and other uses would not meet the basic objectives of the project.

Whether property is owned or can reasonably be acquired by the project sponsor has a strong bearing on the feasibility of developing a project alternative at a different site. No viable alternative sites have been identified within San Francisco where the proposed project could be constructed and meet the project sponsor's objectives. A similar-sized project within the Mid-Market or nearby areas would have similar cumulative effects.

ALTERNATIVE A: NO PROJECT

Description

This alternative would entail no change to the existing surface parking uses on the site. The proposed project would not be built. However, this alternative would not preclude future proposals for redevelopment of the project site.

Impacts

If the No-Project Alternative were implemented, none of the impacts associated with the project would occur. The proposed project's wind effects – elimination of one pedestrian-comfort exceedance, creation of two new pedestrian-comfort exceedances, elimination of four wind hazard exceedances, creation of two new wind hazard exceedances, reduction in annual duration of hazard exceedances, and slight overall reduction in wind speeds – would not occur. The air quality impacts of the proposed project also would not occur. Other less-than-significant effects of the proposed project, including shadow effects on nearby streets and buildings, effects of the proposed 11-story project on visual quality and urban design, and project-specific effects on intersection conditions, transit use, parking, loading, or pedestrian and bicycle traffic, would not occur. Intersection operations and transit operating conditions that would degrade to unacceptable levels of service by the 2020 cumulative horizon year would do so with or without the project. Under this alternative, there would be no incremental contribution from the project site to these degraded conditions, beyond traffic any transit ridership already generated.

Other less-than-significant effects described in the Initial Study, including generation of noise during construction, potential discovery of subsurface cultural resources during excavation, and potentially hazardous materials, among other impacts, would not occur with this alternative.

The No Project Alternative would not meet the State Compensation Insurance Fund's objectives of providing adequate space for its operations and improving efficiency by consolidating its currently dispersed operations.

If this alternative is selected by the San Francisco Planning Commission and a different proposal is submitted at a later date for development of all or part of the project site, that proposal would be subject to a separate project-specific environmental review under the requirements of CEQA.

ALTERNATIVE B: CODE-COMPLIANT ALTERNATIVE

Description

Alternative B, the Code-Compliant Alternative, would entail an office building that complies with existing zoning, height, bulk, and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) restrictions. This alternative, in compliance with the existing height restriction of the 120-X Height and Bulk District, would be 120 feet and approximately seven to eight stories high, and would involve a lower of intensity of uses than the proposed project. This alternative would contain approximately 184,000 square feet of office use, and a two-level below-grade parking garage with about 94 spaces.

Impacts

Compared to the proposed project, Alternative B: Code-Compliant Alternative, because its smaller size, would have less intensive environmental effects on visual quality and urban design, transportation and parking, population, construction noise, air quality, shadows, utilities and public services, and energy/natural resources, although these impacts would be less than significant for both this alternative and the proposed project.

Due to the chaotic wind conditions that exist in the project vicinity, it cannot be assumed that the smaller building in this alternative would have any effect on the pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances that would be created by the proposed project; however, the duration of existing hazard exceedances could be affected by such changes.

In the Code-Compliant Alternative B, the building would have a similar design and visual character as the proposed project, but would be substantially lower than both the proposed project and the adjacent existing SCIF headquarters building. The visual impacts of this alternative, during both day- and nighttime, would be correspondingly reduced.

VI. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The Code-Compliant Alternative B would result in fewer vehicle and transit trips than the proposed project. The impacts of both the proposed project and this alternative on intersection levels of service, transit, parking, pedestrians, bicycles, construction traffic, and contribution to total cumulative traffic volumes would be less than significant. This alternative would make a smaller contribution to the growth in cumulative traffic impacts at nearby intersections than the proposed project. The proposed project would contribute more than five percent to growth in cumulative traffic volumes at three intersections, while the Code-Compliant Alternative would contribute more than five percent growth at only one of these intersections. However, levels of service at all three of these intersections under cumulative conditions would remain at a satisfactory level, and, as a result, neither the proposed project nor this alternative would have a significant cumulative impact.

The height of this alternative would be approximately two-thirds of the height of the proposed project, and shadow impacts on nearby streets and sidewalks would therefore be reduced. Neither this alternative nor the project would shade any publicly accessible open spaces.

Alternative B would generate a smaller increase in employment and daily population than the proposed project. The population effects of both this alternative and the proposed project would be less than significant.

This alternative would have similar effects in those environmental areas not governed by height or bulk: land use, operation noise, biology, geology/topography, water, hazards, and cultural resources.

Alternative B would partially satisfy the project sponsor's objectives by providing a portion of the additional space that is projected to be needed for growth but would not allow SCIF to consolidate its operations.

Alternative B would be the environmentally superior alternative.

VII. EIR AUTHORS

EIR AUTHORS

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VIII. APPENDICES

- A. Initial Study
- B. Wind Tunnel Study
- C. Intersection Level of Service Designations
- D. Distribution List

Appendix A

Initial Study



PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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DATE: November 30, 2002

TO: Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and Interested Parties

FROM: San Francisco Planning Department

RE: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

The San Francisco Planning Department is the Lead Agency and is preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project identified below. You have requested notification of Environmental Impact Reports prepared by our agency. The project detailed below and on the attached notice has been determined to require an Environmental Impact Report

Project Title: 2001.1039E: 55 Ninth Street
Project Sponsors: State Compensation Insurance Fund

Project Description: The State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF) proposes to expand their San Francisco office at 1275 Market Street by constructing an adjacent 11-story, approximately 268,000 square-foot office building at 55 Ninth Street. The project site (Assessor's Block 3701, Lot 63) is occupied by a surface parking with about 173 parking spaces, located mid-block on the northeastern side of Ninth Street in the block bounded by Market, Ninth, Mission, and Eighth Streets in the Mid-Market neighborhood. The new building would be approximately 175 feet high, plus a 31-foot mechanical penthouse, and would contain about 268,000 square feet of office space and a two-level below-grade parking garage with about 134 parking spaces. The proposed building would share open space with and be connected to the adjacent SCIF office building (Lot 64) by a pedestrian bridge located on the second floor and a pedestrian tunnel connection on the second level of the parking garage. The entrance to the new building and access to off-street parking and loading would be from Ninth Street. There would be four loading bays and a trash compactor on the ground level in the center of the building. Trucks would enter and exit on Ninth Street and could exit to Laskie Street onto Mission Street. The project site is zoned C-3-G (Downtown General Commercial) and is within a 120-X Height and Bulk District. The proposed project would require authorization by the San Francisco Planning Commission pursuant to San Francisco *Planning Code* Section 309 (Permit Review in C-3 Districts) and Section 321 (Office Development: Annual Limit), a height and bulk reclassification, and exception to the bulk requirements. The proposed project would also require approval by the San Francisco Department of Public Works of a merge of Lots 63 and 64.

If your agency is a Responsible or a Trustee Agency, we need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency may need to use the EIR when considering a permit or other approval for this project. We will also need the name of the contact person for your agency.

Comments concerning the environmental effects of this project are welcomed. In order for your concerns to be fully considered throughout the environmental review process, we would appreciate receiving any comments you may have about issues to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Report by **December 30, 2002**. The proposed project may have environmental impacts and an Initial Study has been prepared to consider these and identify issues that will require analysis in the EIR. The Initial Study is either attached or is available for review upon request from Art Aguilar from the Planning Department. If you wish to receive a copy of the Draft EIR directly when it is available, please contact Art Aguilar. Please direct all requests and all responses to this notice to Art Aguilar at (415) 558-5973 or in writing at the address above.



PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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NOTICE THAT AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT IS DETERMINED TO BE REQUIRED

Date of this Notice: November 30, 2002

Lead Agency: San Francisco Planning Department
1660 Mission Street, Suite 500
San Francisco, CA 94103-2414

Agency Contact Person: Art Aguilar

Telephone: (415) 558-5973

Project Title: 2001.1039E: 55 Ninth Street

Project Sponsor: State Compensation Insurance Fund

Project Contact Person: Denise Burian

Telephone: (415) 565-1622

Project Address: 55 Ninth Street

Assessor's Block and Lot: Block 3701, Lots 63 and 64

City and County: San Francisco

Project Description: The State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF) proposes to expand their San Francisco office at 1275 Market Street by constructing an adjacent 11-story, approximately 268,000 square-foot office building at 55 Ninth Street. The project site (Assessor's Block 3701, Lot 63) is occupied by a surface parking with about 173 parking spaces, located mid-block on the northeastern side of Ninth Street in the block bounded by Market, Ninth, Mission, and Eighth Streets in the Mid-Market neighborhood. The new building would be approximately 175 feet high, plus a 31-foot mechanical penthouse, and would contain about 268,000 square feet of office space and a two-level below-grade parking garage with about 134 parking spaces. The proposed building would share open space with and be connected to the adjacent SCIF office building (Lot 64) by a pedestrian bridge located on the second floor and a pedestrian tunnel connection below the second level of the parking garage. The entrance to the new building and access to off-street parking and loading would be from Ninth Street. There would be four loading bays and a trash compactor on the ground level in the center of the building. Trucks would enter and exit on Ninth Street and could exit to Laskie Street onto Mission Street. The project site is zoned C-3-G (Downtown General Commercial) and is within a 120-X Height and Bulk District. The proposed project would require authorization by the San Francisco Planning Commission pursuant to San Francisco *Planning Code* Section 309 (Permit Review in C-3 Districts) and Section 321 (Office Development: Annual Limit), a height and bulk reclassification, and exception to the bulk requirements. The proposed project would also require approval by the San Francisco Department of Public Works of a merge of Lots 63 and 64.

THIS PROJECT MAY HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT IS REQUIRED. This determination is based upon the criteria of the Guidelines of the State Secretary for Resources, Section 15063 (Initial Study), 15064 (Determining Significant Effect), and 15065 (Mandatory Findings of Significance), and the following reasons, as documented in the Environmental Evaluation (Initial Study) for the project, which is attached.

Deadline for Filing of an Appeal of this Determination to the Planning Commission: December 30, 2002. An appeal requires: (1) a letter specifying the grounds for the appeal, and (2) a \$209 filing fee. The public is invited to comment on the scope and content of the EIR. Please provide the input on scope and content of the EIR by December 30, 2002.

Rich Cooper, for

Paul Maltzer
Environmental Review Officer

REVISED

The text of the Initial Study has been revised since publication. Additions to the text have been underlined and deletions have been ~~struck through~~.

INITIAL STUDY

2001.1039E: 55 Ninth Street

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SETTING

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF) proposes to expand their San Francisco office at 1275 Market Street by constructing an adjacent 11-story, approximately 268,000 square-foot office building at 55 Ninth Street (Figure 1, page 3). The proposed project site (Assessor's Block 3701, Lot 63) is occupied by a surface parking lot with about 173 parking spaces, located mid-block on the northeastern side of Ninth Street in the block bounded by Market, Ninth, Mission and Eighth Streets in the Mid-Market neighborhood. The existing 1275 Market Street SCIF building occupies the adjacent Lot 64, to the northwest.

The new building would be approximately 175 feet high, plus a 31-foot mechanical penthouse, and would contain about 268,000 square feet of office space and a two-level below grade parking garage with about 134 spaces (93 self-park and 41 tandem), as shown in Figures 2 through 10, pages 3 to 12.

The proposed building would be connected to the existing adjacent approximately 325,000 square-foot State Compensation Insurance Fund office building (occupying Lot 64) by a pedestrian bridge located on the second floor and a pedestrian/service tunnel connection below the second level of the parking garage. These connections would allow for movement of supplies and would be accessible by freight elevator. The proposed steel frame building would feature glass curtain walls with the southeast and southwest corners constructed of natural stone material to echo the facade of the 1275 Market Street building.

The proposed project would provide approximately 25,392 square feet of exterior, landscaped open space available to the public, that would be shared with the proposed new building and the existing 1275 Market Street building.

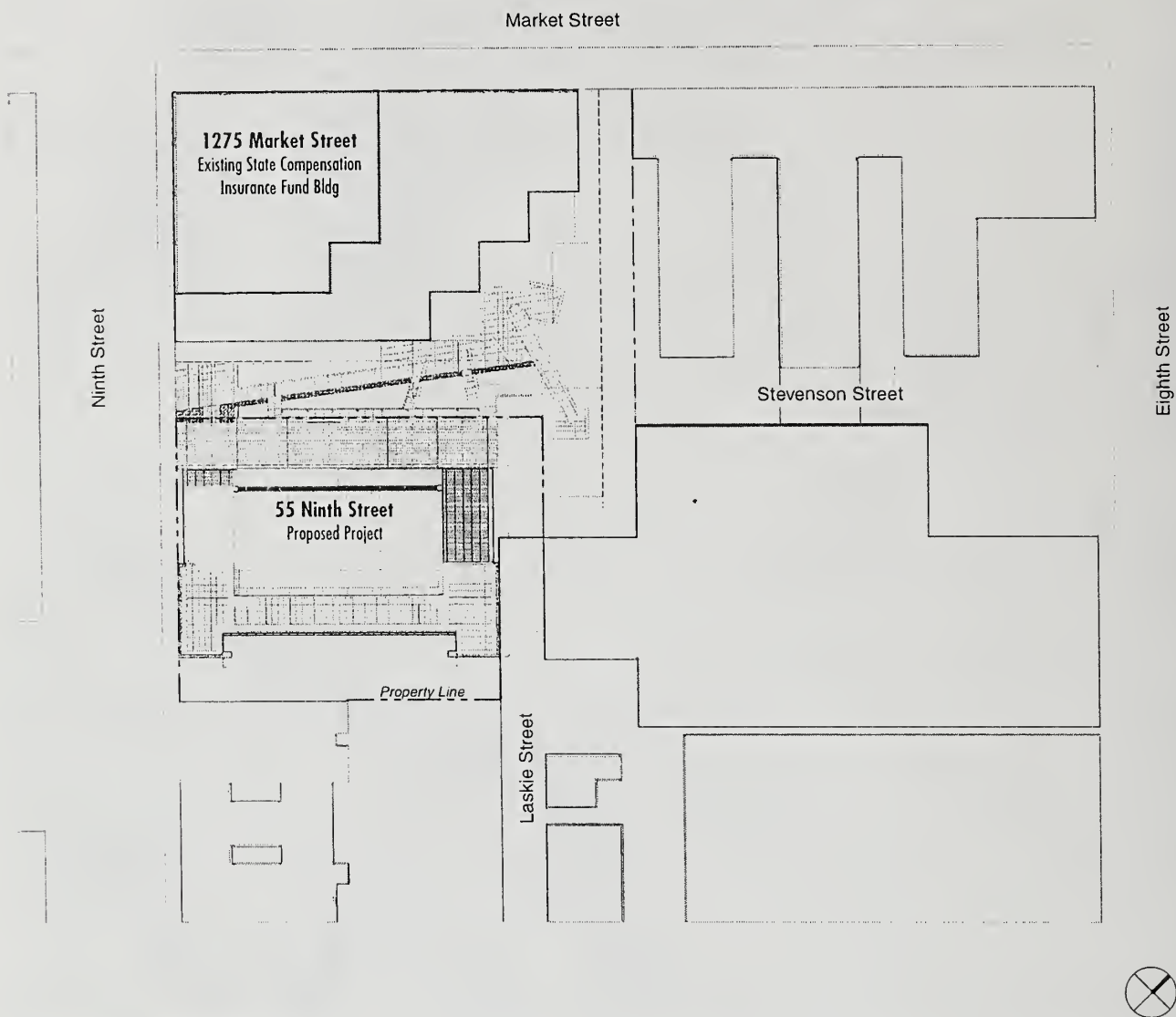
The entrance to the new building and access to off-street parking and loading would be from Ninth Street. There would be four loading bays and a trash compactor on the ground level in the center of the building. Trucks would enter and exit on Ninth Street and could also exit on Laskie Street, which connects with Mission Street.

The project site (Lot 63) is approximately 35,800 square feet in size and is located in the Mid-Market neighborhood. The site is zoned C-3-G (Downtown General Commercial) and is within a 120-X Height and Bulk District. The Floor Area Ratio is 6:1. The proposed project would require authorization by the San Francisco City Planning Commission pursuant to *Planning Code* Section 309 (Permit Review in a C-3 District) and Section 321 (Annual Limit on Office Development), a height and bulk reclassification, and an exception to the bulk requirements. The proposed project would also require approval by the San Francisco Department of Public Works of a merge of Lot 63 (the project site) and Lot 64 (the existing 1275 Market Street SCIF building).



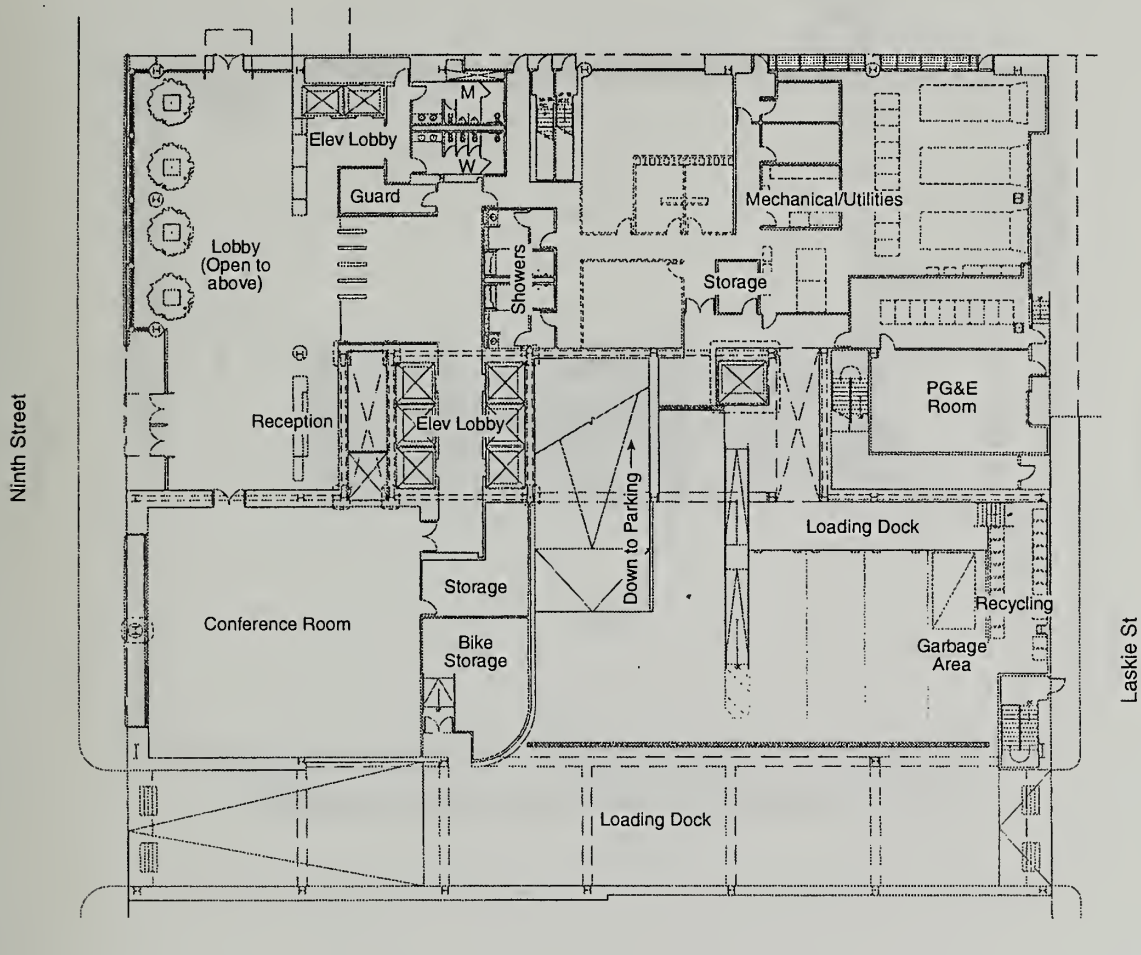
Source: During Associates

REGIONAL LOCATION **FIGURE 1**



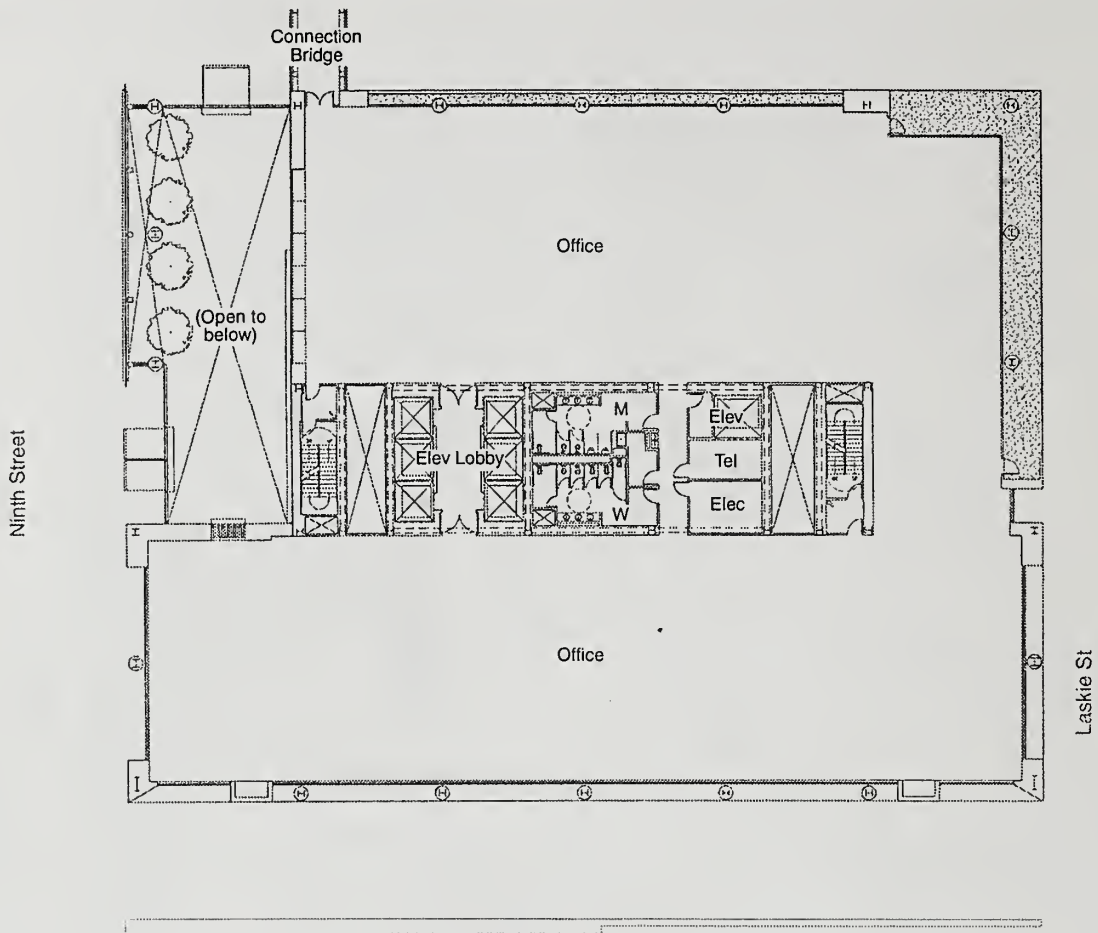
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

SITE PLAN **FIGURE 2**



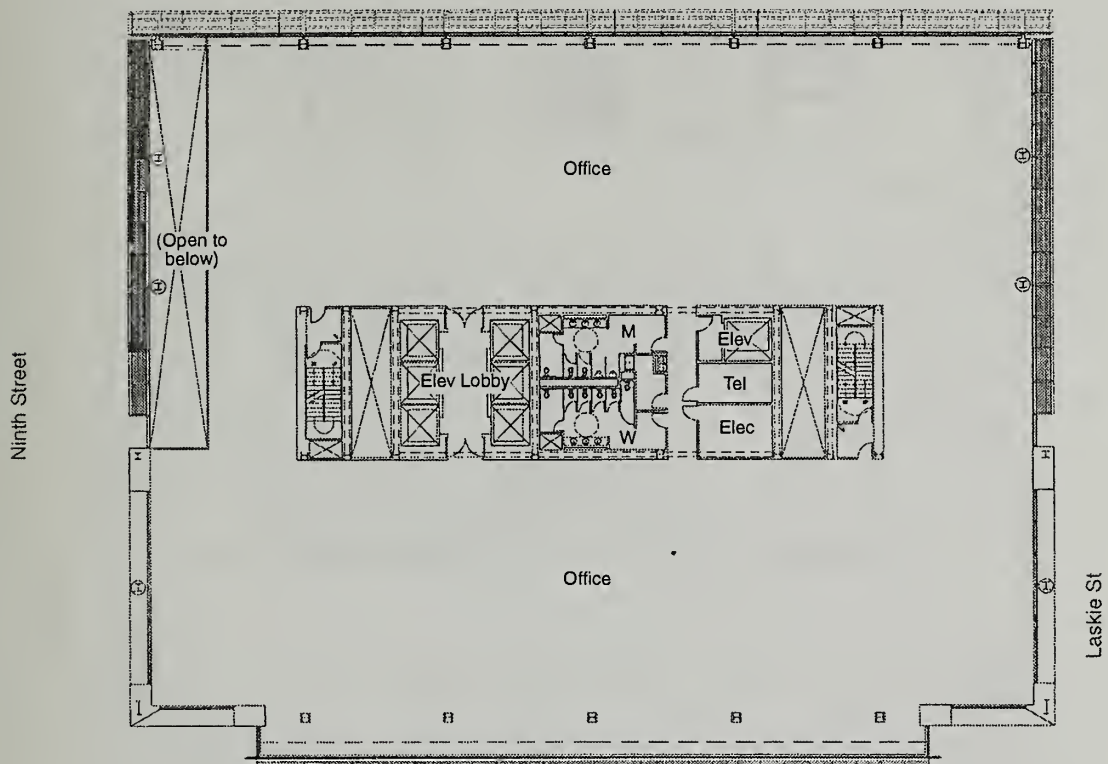
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

GROUND FLOOR PLAN **FIGURE 3**



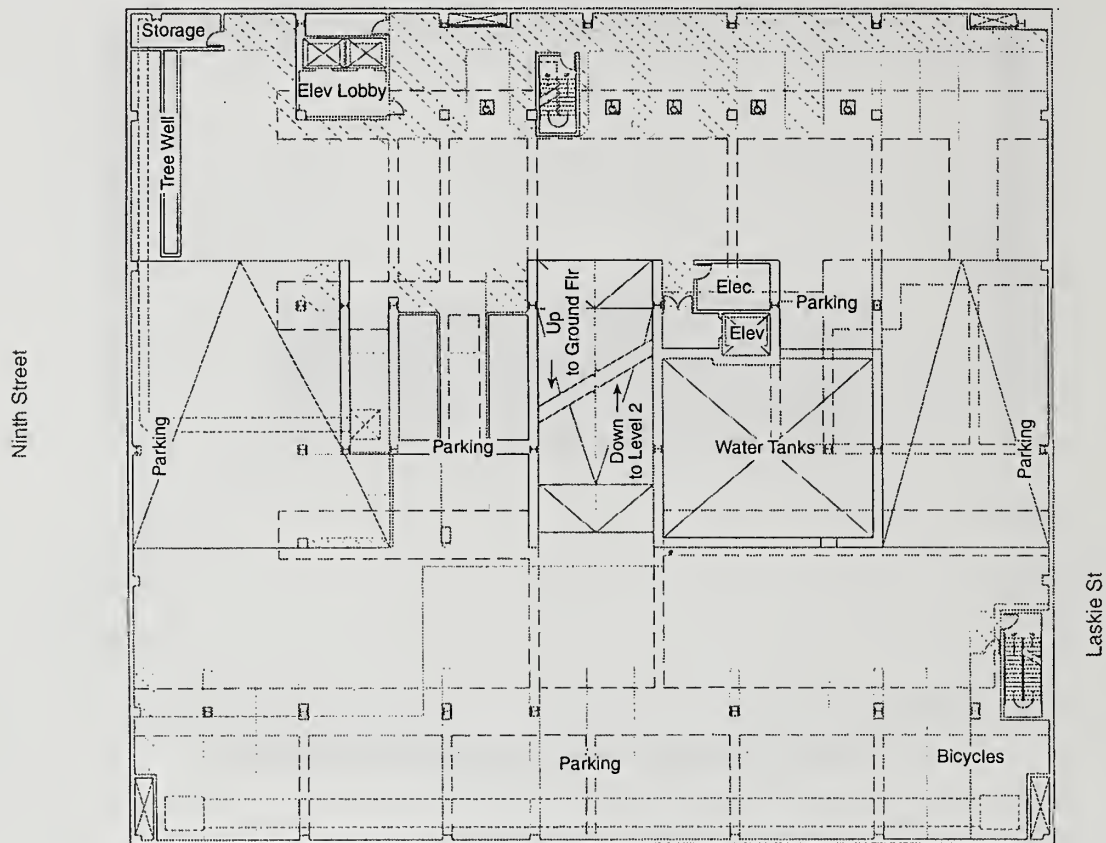
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

SECOND FLOOR PLAN FIGURE 4



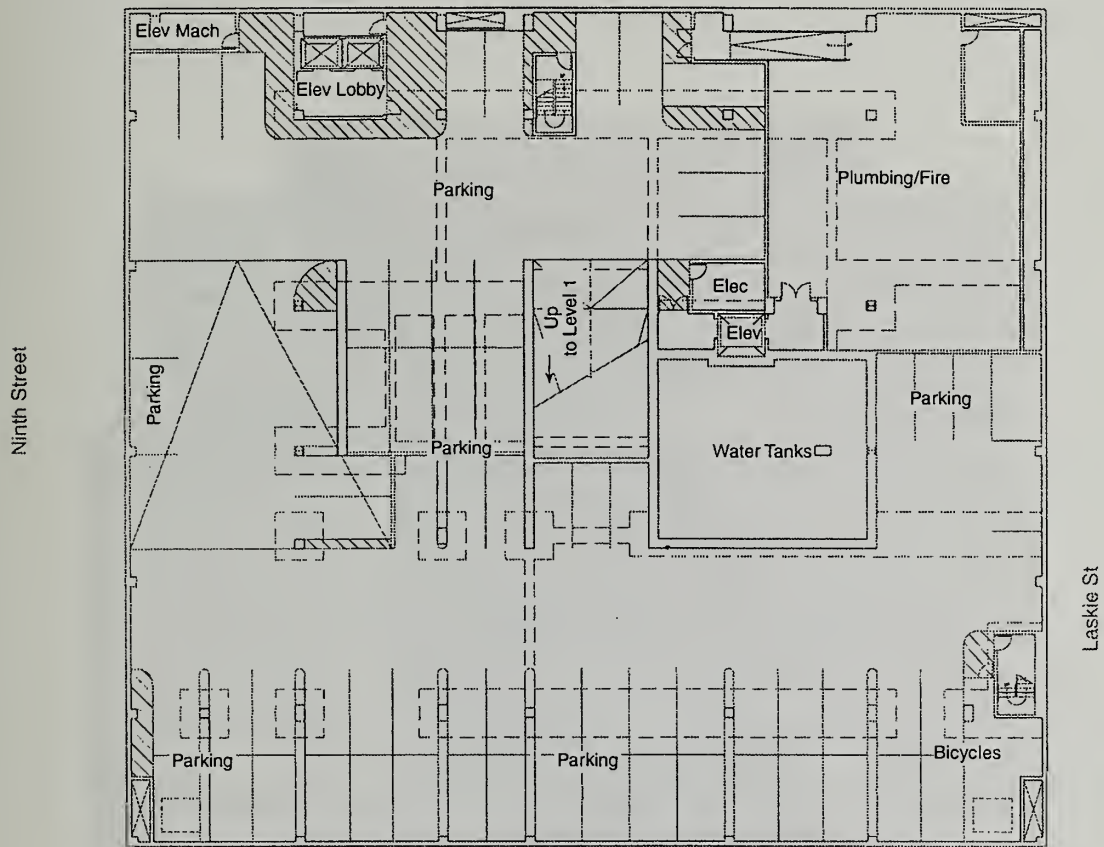
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

TYPICAL UPPER FLOOR PLAN FIGURE 5



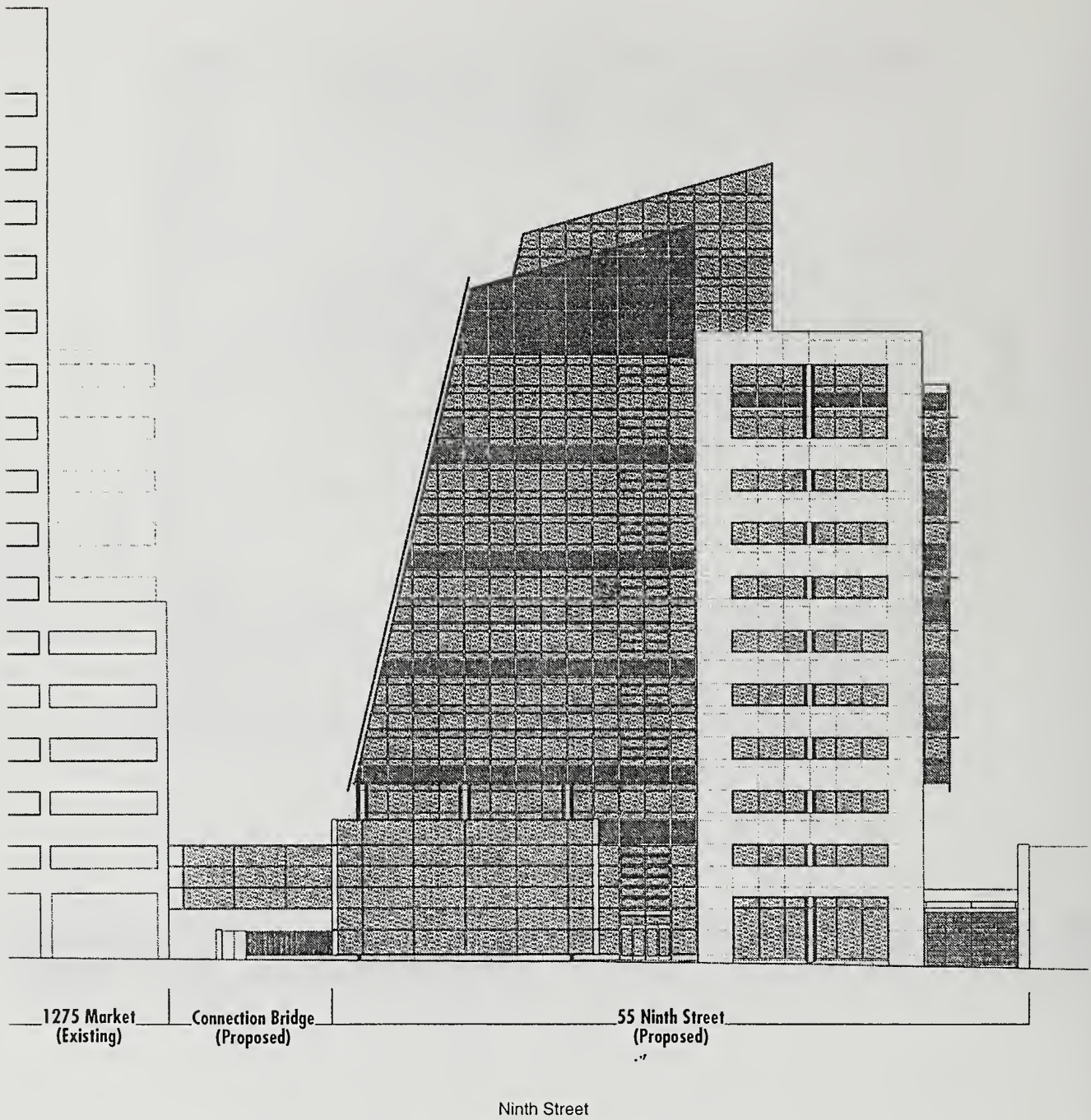
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN—LEVEL 1 **FIGURE 6**



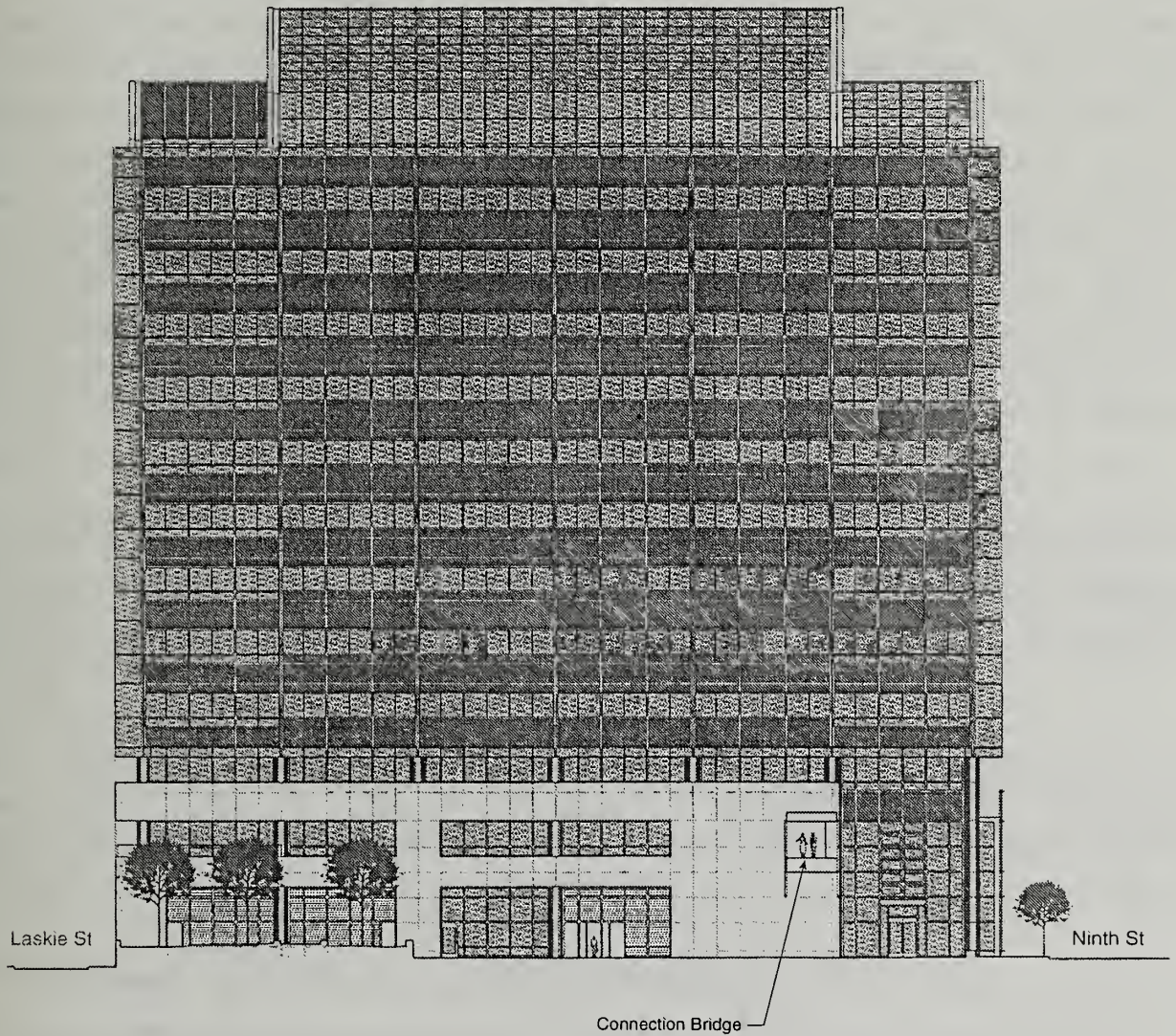
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN—LEVEL 2 **FIGURE 7**



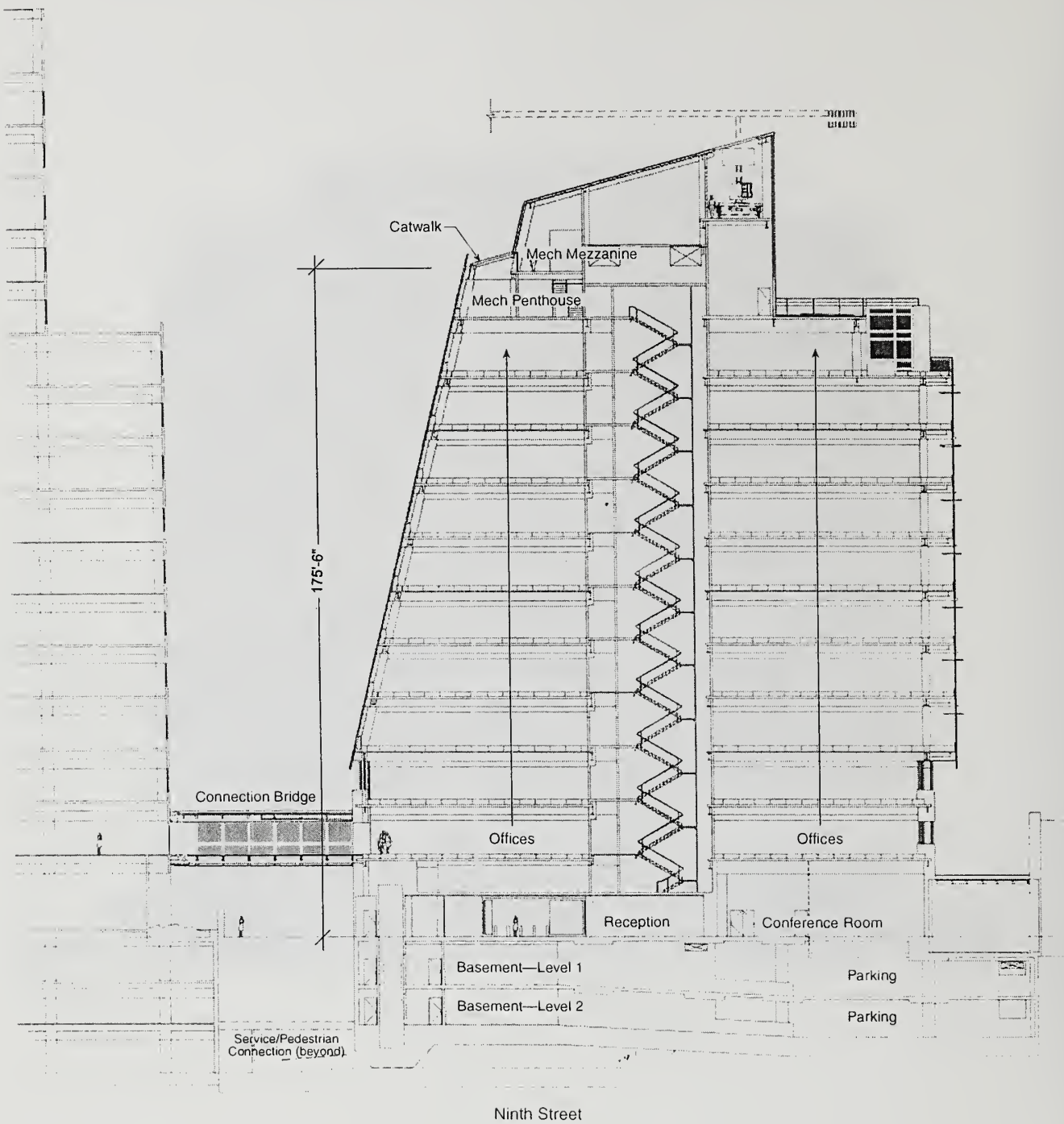
Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

WEST ELEVATION (VIEW FROM NINTH STREET) FIGURE 8



Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

NORTH ELEVATION (VIEW FROM 1275 MARKET) FIGURE 9



Source: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.

NORTH-SOUTH SECTION **FIGURE 10**

Project construction would take about 92 weeks (approximately 21.5 months). The project construction cost is estimated at \$75 million. The project sponsor is the California State Compensation Insurance Fund, and the project architect is Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum, Inc.

B. PROJECT SETTING

The project site is in the Mid-Market area, just south of the Civic Center. The portion of Market Street near the site is occupied by low-, mid-, and high-rise buildings with uses including residential, hotel, retail, commercial, restaurant, and government offices. These buildings were constructed at various times during the twentieth century. Most buildings are one to five stories in height; taller buildings include the eight-story Ramada Hotel on the southeast side of Market Street to the northeast of the SCIF headquarters, the historic 11-story San Francisco Merchandise Mart building on the southeast side of Market Street, between Ninth and Tenth Streets (facing the project site from the opposite side of Ninth Street), the 30-story residential/commercial/office Fox Plaza tower located in the triangular block bounded by Polk, Hayes, and Market Streets west of the project site, and the existing 17-story SCIF headquarters at 1275 Market Street on the corner of Ninth Street (northwest of the project site). The two-story San Francisco Religious Society of Friends building on Ninth Street is adjacent to the project site to the southeast.

To the west, north, and northeast of the project site is the Civic Center, with buildings of various ages occupied by office, commercial, residential, restaurant, parking, public, and cultural facilities. Building heights vary from one to 30 stories, including several high-rise buildings of 20 to 30 stories in height, a number of older low-rise buildings of one to four stories, and several intermediate-sized buildings of six to 17 stories.

Ninth Street between Market and Mission Streets, which includes the project site, has buildings ranging in height from one to eleven stories constructed at various times during the twentieth century, and occupied by retail, hotel, restaurant, bar, office, institutional, and parking uses. Further to the south and southeast, buildings on Ninth Street range from one to four stories in height, and are occupied by a variety of retail, commercial, and residential uses.

II. SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

A. EFFECTS FOUND TO BE POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT

The proposed project is examined in this Initial Study to identify potential effects on the environment. On the basis of this Initial Study, project-specific effects that relate to visual quality, transportation, wind, and shadows have been determined to be potentially significant, and will be analyzed in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). In addition, the EIR will provide additional discussion of land use for informational purposes, although the impacts are determined in this Initial Study to be less than significant.

B. EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

The following potential environmental effects were determined either to be less than significant or to be reduced to a less than significant level through mitigation measures included in the Initial Study and project. These items are discussed in Section III below, and require no further environmental analysis in the EIR: Land Use, Glare, Population, Noise, Air Quality, Utilities/Public Services, Biology, Geology/Topography, Water, Energy/Natural Resources, Hazards, and Cultural Resources.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

A. COMPATIBILITY WITH ZONING, PLANS AND POLICIES	<u>N/A</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
1. Discuss any variances, special authorizations, changes proposed to the City Planning Code or Zoning Map, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Discuss any conflicts with any other adopted environmental plans and goals of the City or Region, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The *San Francisco Planning Code*, which incorporates by reference the City's Zoning Maps, governs permitted uses, densities, and the configuration of buildings within San Francisco. Permits to construct new buildings (or to alter or demolish existing ones) may not be issued unless either the proposed project conforms to the *Code*, or an exception is granted pursuant to provisions of the *Code*. The project would require authorization from the City Planning Commission pursuant to Sections 309 (Permit Review in C-3 Districts) and 321 (Office Development: Annual Limit) of the *Planning Code*, a Height and Bulk reclassification, and an exception to the bulk requirements.

The project site is located in a C-3-G (Downtown General Commercial) district in San Francisco and a 120-X Height and Bulk District. The C-3-G District covers the western portions of downtown and is composed of a variety of uses, including retail, offices, hotels, entertainment, clubs, institutions, and high-density residential. Many of these uses have a citywide or regional function, although the intensity of development is lower than in the downtown core area. As in the case of other downtown districts, no off-street parking is required for individual commercial buildings, but in portions of this district, automobile parking is a major land use, serving this district and the adjacent office and retail core areas. In the vicinity of Market Street, the configuration of this district reflects easy accessibility by rapid transit.

The project site is located in the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency's (SFRA) Mid-Market Redevelopment Project Area for the proposed Mid-Market Redevelopment Plan and Mid-Market Redevelopment Special Use District.¹ The Mid-Market Redevelopment Project Area is located in downtown San Francisco, generally from Fifth

¹ San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and City and County of San Francisco Planning Department, *Mid-Market Redevelopment Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report*, Case No. 2002.0805E, published September 28, 2002.

Street to Tenth Street along the Market and Mission Streets corridor. The project site was identified as a “Potential Development Opportunity Site” in the SFRA’s proposed Mid-Market Redevelopment Plan. The Mid-Market Plan would provide for mixed-use development on most opportunity sites. Implementation of the Mid-Market Plan would intensify activities and residential and employee population in the project area and would not introduce any new land uses to the area.

Section 309 of the *San Francisco Planning Code*, Permit Review in C-3 Districts, governs the review of project authorization and building and site permit applications in C-3 Districts. Section 309 also permits the imposition of certain conditions in regard to such matters as a project's siting and design, view, parking, traffic and transit effects, energy consumption, pedestrian environment, and other matters. Section 309 requires that the Zoning Administrator determine that the project complies with *Planning Code* Section 138 (Open Space), Section 139 (Downtown Park Fund), Section 146 (Shadows on Streets), Section 147 (Shadows on Publicly Accessible Open Spaces), Section 149 (Public Art), Section 102.8(b)(16) (Replacement of Short-term Parking), Section 313 (Office Affordable Housing Production Program), and Section 314 (Child Care). As an office project, the project would also be subject to *Planning Code* Section 321 - Office Development: Annual Limit.

The proposed project would require amendments to the Height and Bulk designations of the site, pursuant to Section 302 of the *Planning Code*. The proposed change in the Height and Bulk District is from 120-X to 180-S. The 180-S Height and Bulk District permits buildings up to a height of 180 feet plus mechanical penthouses. (The existing 120-X Height and Bulk District permits buildings up to a height of 120 feet.) The proposed project would also require an amendment to zoning map 1H of the Planning Code.

In the 180-S Height and Bulk District, there are no length or diagonal dimension limitations applicable to the base (the lowest portion of the building extending vertically to a streetwall height up to 1.25 times the width of the widest abutting street or 50 feet, whichever is more). The building base shall be delineated from the lower and upper tower and related to abutting buildings by a setback, cornice line or equivalent projection or other appropriate means. Above the base, buildings up to 160 feet in height may have a maximum length of 160 feet, a maximum floor size of 20,000 square feet, and a maximum diagonal dimension of 190 feet. Upper tower bulk controls, applying to portions of buildings taller than 160 feet, are: a maximum length of 130 feet; a maximum average floor size of 12,000 square feet; a maximum floor size for any floor of 17,000 square feet; and a maximum average diagonal measure of 160 feet. The proposed project would require an exception to these bulk units.

The proposed project would require approval from the Department of Public Works for a lot merge to create one parcel from the two existing lots (63 and 64) of Assessor's Block 3701, containing the project site and the existing SCIF building at 1275 Market Street, respectively.

The project would also require an amendment to map 5 of the Downtown Area Plan of the San Francisco *General Plan* corresponding to the changes in height and bulk discussed above. The City's *General Plan*, which provides general policies and objectives to guide land use decisions, contains some policies which relate to physical

environmental issues. The proposed project would not obviously or substantially conflict with any such adopted environmental plan or policy, although, as mentioned above, the proposed project is not consistent with the height and bulk provisions of the *General Plan*, and would require amendments to the *General Plan*. In general, potential conflicts with the *General Plan* are considered by decision makers independently of the environmental review process, as part of the decision whether to approve or disapprove a proposed project. Conflicts either identified in this environmental document or not would be considered in that context, and would not alter the physical environmental effects of the proposed project.

Environmental plans and policies are those, like the Bay Area *Air Quality Plan*, which directly address physical environmental issues and/or contain targets or standards which must be met in order to preserve or improve characteristics of the City's physical environment. The proposed project would not obviously or substantially conflict with any such adopted environmental plan or policy.

In November 1986, the voters of San Francisco approved *Proposition M, the Accountable Planning Initiative*, which added Section 101.1 to the *San Francisco Planning Code* to establish eight Priority Policies. These policies are: preservation and enhancement of neighborhood-serving retail uses; protection of neighborhood character; preservation and enhancement of affordable housing; discouragement of commuter automobiles; protection of industrial and service land uses from commercial office development and enhancement of resident employment and business ownership; maximization of earthquake preparedness; landmark and historic building preservation; and protection of open space. Prior to issuing a permit for any project which requires an Initial Study under CEQA; prior to issuing a permit for any demolition, conversion, or change of use; and prior to taking any action which requires a finding of consistency with the *General Plan*, the City is required to find that the proposed project or legislation is consistent with the Priority Policies. The case report and approval motions for the project will contain the analysis determining whether the proposed project is consistent with the Priority Policies.

The Planning Commission must certify the EIR as a complete and accurate environmental document for the project prior to taking any approval actions. As described above, the project would require authorization by the City Planning Commission pursuant to Sections 309 and 321 of the *Planning Code* and amendments to the Height and Bulk designations of the site pursuant to Section 302 along with corresponding amendments to the San Francisco *General Plan*; an exception to the bulk requirements; approval from the Department of Public Works for a lot merge; an amendment to zoning map 1H of the *Planning Code*; and a building permit from the Department of Building Inspection. Approvals necessary for the project and the relationship of the project to *Planning Code* requirements will be described in the EIR.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

All items except Visual Quality, Transportation/Circulation, Wind and Shadows on the Initial Study Environmental Evaluation Checklist have been checked "No," indicating that, upon evaluation, staff has determined that the proposed project could not have a significant adverse environmental effect. For items where the conclusion is "To be Determined," the analysis will be included in the EIR. Several of the Checklist items have been checked

"Discussed," indicating that the Initial Study text includes discussion about that particular issue. For all of the items checked "No" without a discussion, the conclusions regarding potential significant adverse environmental effects are based on field observation, staff experience and expertise on similar projects, and/or standard reference material available within the Planning Department such as the Department's *Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines for Environmental Review*, or the California Natural Diversity Data Base and maps, published by the California Department of Fish and Game. For each Checklist item, staff considered both the individual and cumulative impacts of the proposed project.

1. <u>Land Use</u> - Could the project:	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
a. Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Have any substantial impact upon the existing character of the vicinity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The site of the proposed building is currently occupied by a surface parking lot. The project site (Assessor's Block 3701, Lot 63) is located in the Mid-Market neighborhood, on the northeast side of Ninth Street between Market and Mission Streets, in the block bounded by Market, Ninth, Mission, and Eighth Streets. Laskie Street, located to the northeast of the project site, is a dead-end alleyway that connects to Mission Street to the southeast. The site of the proposed building is currently occupied by a surface parking lot with approximately 173 parking spaces. The existing 325,000 square foot, 17-story State Compensation Insurance Fund occupies the adjacent lot (Lot 64) to the northwest of the project site. The project vicinity has a variety of uses including residential, hotel, retail, commercial, restaurant, bar, office, institutional, and public and cultural facilities. These nearby low-, mid-, and high-rise buildings vary from one to 30 stories in height and were constructed at various times during the twentieth century. To the north and west of the project site is the Civic Center complex of government and public buildings, and a variety of retail, commercial, and residential uses occupying low- to mid-rise buildings to the south and east.

The project would convert an existing surface parking use to an 11-story office building with two levels of underground parking and ground floor open space. The introduction of office uses to the project site would continue a wider trend of more intensive development in the Mid-Market area.

The development of approximately 268,000 square feet of office space in the area would not be a significant effect of the proposed project because it would be in an area that is intensively developed and that already supports substantial amounts of office, hotel, residential, retail, commercial, and cultural development in surrounding blocks. In addition, the area already includes high-rise buildings such as the existing 17-story SCIF headquarters adjacent to the project site at 1275 Market Street, the eight-story Ramada Hotel on the southeast side of Market Street to the northeast of the SCIF headquarters, the 11-story San Francisco Merchandise Mart on Ninth Street across from the project site, and the 30-story residential/commercial/office Fox Plaza tower west of the project site on the opposite side of Market Street. As discussed in Project Setting, above, existing development to the south of the proposed

project site is largely low-rise, ranging from one to four stories in height. The proposed office use would be similar in character to, and shorter than, the tallest buildings in the vicinity, although it would be taller than the mid- and low-rise buildings in the area. The project would be generally compatible with the prevailing urbanized character of the area. Because the project would be developed within the existing block and street configuration, it could not divide the physical arrangement of an established community.

In conclusion, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse land use impacts. However, the EIR will discuss land use for context and informational purposes.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
2. <u>Visual Quality</u> - Could the project:			
a. Have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect?			<u>To be Determined</u>
b. Substantially degrade or obstruct any scenic view or vista now observed from public areas?			<u>To be Determined</u>
c. Generate obtrusive light or glare substantially impacting other properties?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Aesthetic effect

Aesthetics and urban design are subjective fields, and individuals may hold differing opinions about the aesthetic design of any proposed project. Although the project design is intended to complement immediately surrounding buildings in terms of design and materials, and, at 11 stories above ground, would be lower than the tallest neighboring buildings, others may feel differently upon studying the proposal.

The design of the proposed project would comply with Planning Commission Resolution No. 9212, which prohibits the use of mirrored or reflective glass. The proposed project would not contain mirrored glass, but would be visible from some viewpoints, especially those to the south, because of its height.

Due to the size of the proposed project and the potential visibility of the proposed new construction, the EIR will include visual simulations and a more detailed discussion of aesthetic effects.

Views

The topography of the area surrounding the site is flat, and existing development limits views from streets and sidewalks, especially to the north and west of the site. Views currently available to the public in the vicinity of the project site are available from Civic Center Plaza and United Nations Plaza, one block north and one block northeast of the project site, respectively, but views of the proposed building from almost all of United Nations Plaza and Civic Center Plazas would be blocked by existing buildings including the SCIF headquarters and Ramada Hotel. Private buildings in the area may have views of hills to the west, the downtown skyline to the northeast, or beyond. Views from public streets or private properties may be altered by the proposed construction, although this effect would be limited by the fact that the neighborhood is already densely developed. Due to the height and configuration of the proposed new construction, the EIR will include a more detailed discussion of effects on views.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
3. <u>Population</u> - Could the project:			
a. Induce substantial growth or concentration of population?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Displace a large number of people (involving either housing or employment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Create a substantial demand for additional housing in San Francisco, or substantially reduce the housing supply?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The addition of 268,000 square feet of office space would increase the daily population on the project site by approximately 1,200 people, based on a density of one employee per 223 gross square feet of government office space.² While potentially noticeable to the immediately adjacent neighbors, this population increase would be small relative to the existing population of the concentrated residential, hotel, retail, commercial, office, institutional, and cultural uses in the project area, and would not be a significant impact of the proposed project. The physical environmental effects of this increase in population on site are or will be addressed elsewhere, primarily in the air quality section of this Initial Study and the transportation section of the EIR.

The project would accommodate about 1,200 jobs on the site. Some of these would be existing SCIF employees relocated from other locations in downtown San Francisco, where SCIF leases approximately 100,000 square feet, and plans to lease an additional 40,000 to 60,000 square feet in the near future. In addition to employees who would be relocated from these other locations when the proposed project is completed, the SCIF projects a total of 444 new positions in 2002, and another 570 positions over the next five years. Many of the 1,200 relocated and new SCIF employees accommodated at the project site would already be living in the City. Others would come from outside San Francisco, and may seek housing within the City boundaries. Relocated and new employees who continue to live in outlying areas and commute into the City would contribute to potential transportation impacts, which will be addressed in the EIR.

The project would displace one or two existing employees of the existing surface parking lot. In the large and dynamic economy of the San Francisco area, this would not be considered a significant impact.

The project site does not currently contain any housing; therefore, no residents would be displaced as a result of project implementation.

~~As a building owned by an agency of the State of California that would be used to carry out its governmental purpose, t~~The proposed project would be exempt from contributing funds to the Office of Affordable Housing Production Program (San Francisco Planning Code Section 313(b)(3)). However, the proposed project would not displace any residents or reduce the housing supply.

In conclusion, population effects would be less than significant and will not be discussed in the EIR.

² Estimate by State Compensation Insurance Board. Jim True, Real Property Manager, telephone conversation, February 14, 2002.

Yes No Discussed

4. **Transportation/Circulation** - Could the project:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| a. Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system? | <u>To be Determined</u> |
| b. Interfere with existing transportation systems, causing substantial alterations to circulation patterns or major traffic hazards? | <u>To be Determined</u> |
| c. Cause a substantial increase in transit demand which cannot be accommodated by existing or proposed transit capacity? | <u>To be Determined</u> |
| d. Cause a substantial increase in parking demand which cannot be accommodated by existing parking facilities? | <u>To be Determined</u> |

The proposed project would include approximately 268,000 square feet of office space, approximately 134 below grade parking spaces, and four loading spaces. The increase in employees on the project site would result in increased demands on the local transportation system, including increased traffic, transit demand, and parking demand. A Transportation Study will be conducted by a transportation consultant under the supervision of the Planning Department, and discussed in the EIR. The study will address the impacts of the proposed project on traffic and vehicular circulation, transit, pedestrian circulation, bicycling, parking, freight loading during project construction and occupancy, and cumulative traffic impacts.

Yes No Discussed

5. **Noise** - Could the project:

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. Increase substantially the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Violate Title 24 Noise Insulation Standards, if applicable? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Be substantially impacted by existing noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Project Operation

The noise generated by occupancy of the proposed office building would not be considered a significant impact of the project. The main source of operational noise would be vehicles. Delivery vehicles and automobiles accessing the project would generate noise on Ninth Street and the entrance and loading bays at the southern portion of the site, but, as Ninth Street is heavily traveled and the project site is currently used as a parking lot, the increase in noise would not be significant. Noise generated by office uses is common and generally accepted in urban areas, particularly in mixed-use areas such as office/hotel/residential/commercial/cultural/institutional uses in the project vicinity. In addition, based on published scientific acoustic studies, the traffic volumes in the project area would need approximately to double to produce an increase in ambient noise levels noticeable to most people in the area. As the proposed project's uses would not cause doubling of the traffic volumes in the project area, the proposed project would not cause a noticeable nor significant increase in the ambient noise levels in the area.

Hence, operational noise requires no further analysis and will not be discussed in the EIR.

Project Construction

Construction of the proposed project would occur over a period of about 29 months. The project would have a mat foundation and piles would not be necessary. The proposed construction would not generate pile driving noise, but could generate other construction noise and possibly vibration that may be considered an annoyance by occupants of nearby properties. The noise levels at receptors near the project site would depend on their distance from the noise source and on the presence or absence of noise barriers. The noise would be most noticeable along the frontage of the construction area and decrease with distance. Construction noise is regulated by the San Francisco Noise Ordinance (Article 29 of the San Francisco Police Code). The Noise Ordinance requires that project construction work be conducted in the following manner: 1) noise levels of construction equipment, other than impact tools, must not exceed 80 decibels (measured as dBA; a unit of measure for sound - "A" denotes use of the A-weighted scale, which simulates the response to the human ear to various frequencies of sound) at a distance of 100 feet from the source; i.e., the equipment generating the noise; 2) impact tools must have intake and exhaust mufflers that are approved by the Director of the Department of Public Works to best accomplish maximum noise reduction; and 3) if the noise from the construction work would exceed the ambient noise levels at the property line of the site by five dBA, the work must not be conducted between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., unless the Director of the Department of Public Works authorizes a special permit for conducting the work during that period.

No construction activities would occur on Sundays from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. out of respect for nearby worship activities (Improvement Measure 1).

Project construction noise would be temporary and intermittent, would be regulated by the San Francisco Noise Ordinance, and would occur in the context of relatively high urban noise levels existing in the immediate area. Therefore, construction noise would not be considered significant, requires no further analysis, and will not be addressed in the EIR.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
6. <u>Air Quality/Climate</u> - Could the project:			
a. Violate any ambient air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Permeate its vicinity with objectionable odors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Alter wind, moisture or temperature (including sun shading effects) so as to substantially affect public areas, or change the climate either in the community or region?			<u>To be Determined</u>

Air Quality

The Bay Area has both a federal and state air quality plan. Both plans propose the imposition of controls on stationary sources (factories, power plants, industrial sources, etc.) and Transportation Control Measures designed to reduce emissions from automobiles.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) operates a regional monitoring network that measures the ambient concentrations of six air pollutants (the “criteria pollutants”): ozone (O_3), carbon monoxide (CO), fine particulate matter (PM_{10}), lead (Pb), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) and sulfur dioxide (SO_2). Reactive organic gases (ROG also known as reactive hydrocarbons), nitrogen oxides (NO_x including NO_2)³, and PM_{10} are precursors to ozone.

Toxic air contaminants are less pervasive in the urban atmosphere than criteria air pollutants, but are linked to short-term (acute) or long-term (chronic and/or carcinogenic) adverse human health effects. There are hundreds of different types of toxic air contaminants, with varying degrees of toxicity. Sources of toxic air contaminants include industrial processes, commercial operations (e.g., gasoline stations and dry cleaners), and motor vehicle exhaust. Unlike regulations concerning criteria air pollutants, there are no regulatory standards for toxic air contaminants based on the mass of emissions. Instead, emissions of toxic air contaminants are evaluated based on the degree of health risk that could result from exposure to these pollutants.

San Francisco, like all other sub-regions in the Bay Area, contributes to regional air quality problems, primarily ozone in other parts of the Bay Area. Ozone is not emitted directly from air pollutant sources, but is produced in the atmosphere over time and distance through a complex series of photochemical reactions involving hydrocarbons (HC) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x), which are carried downwind as the photochemical reactions occur. Ozone standards are violated most often in the Santa Clara, Livermore and Diablo Valleys, because local topography and meteorological conditions favor the build-up of ozone precursors there.

CO is a non-reactive air pollutant, the major source of which is motor vehicles. CO concentrations are generally highest during periods of peak traffic congestion. Particulate levels are relatively low near the coast and increase with distance from the coast, peaking in dry, sheltered valleys. The primary sources of particulates in San Francisco are construction and demolition, combustion of fuels for heating, and vehicle travel over paved roads.⁴

The Federal Clean Air Act and the California Clean Air Act of 1988 require that the State Air Resources Board, based on air quality monitoring data, designate portions of the state where the federal or state ambient air quality standards are not met as “non-attainment areas.” Because of the differences between the national and state standards, the designation of nonattainment areas is different under the federal and state legislation. On the basis of the monitoring data, the Bay Area had been designated a “non-attainment” area with respect to the Federal O_3

³ Nitrogen Oxides are a class of pollutants comprised of N and O. Of the several nitrogen oxides, only one (NO_2) is considered a primary pollutant with a specific AQ standard. All nitrogen oxides are contributors to ozone formation.

⁴ Bay Area Air Quality Management District, *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines, Assessing the Air Quality Impacts of Projects and Plans*, December 1999.

and CO standards. The Bay Area was subsequently re-classified as a “maintenance” area for CO. The air basin is an attainment area or is unclassified for all other national ambient air quality standards.

Under the California Clean Air Act, the entire San Francisco Bay Air Basin is a nonattainment area for ozone and PM₁₀. The air basin is either in attainment or unclassified for other pollutants under state standards. In addition, San Francisco has experienced violations of the state PM₁₀ standards.

A four-year (1998 to 2001) summary of data collected at the BAAQMD monitoring station at 10 Arkansas Street (about one mile southeast of the project site) indicated that there were no violations of either the one-hour or eight-hour CO standards, or the standards for ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide or lead. The state PM₁₀ standard was exceeded on 1 to 13 days each year during the four-year period of 1998-2001.

In 2000, emissions from motor vehicles were the source of 70 percent of the CO, 41 percent of the HCs, 72 percent of the PM₁₀, 89 percent of the sulfur oxides and 53 percent of the NO_x emitted in San Francisco.⁵

Air quality impacts from land development projects result from project construction and operation. Construction emissions, primarily dust generated by earthmoving activities and criteria air pollutants emitted by construction vehicles, would have a short-term effect on air quality. Operational emissions, generated by project-related traffic and by combustion of natural gas for building space and water heating, would continue to affect air quality throughout the lifetime of the project.

Construction Emissions

Construction activities such as demolition, excavation and grading operations, construction vehicle traffic and wind blowing over exposed earth would generate exhaust emissions and fugitive particulate matter emissions that would temporarily affect local air quality. Construction activities would not involve burning of any materials and would not create objectionable odors. Grading and other construction activities would temporarily affect local air quality for a period of months, causing a temporary increase in particulate dust and other pollutants. Dust emission during excavation would increase particulate concentrations near the site. Under high winds, exceeding 12 miles per hour, localized effects including human discomfort might occur downwind from blowing dust. Construction dust is composed largely of large particles that settle out of the atmosphere more rapidly with increasing distance from the source. More of a nuisance than a hazard for most people, this dust could affect persons with respiratory diseases, as well as sensitive electronic or communications equipment. Consistent with BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines, construction-period air emissions are considered less than significant if effective control measures are implemented. The project sponsor has agreed to implement Mitigation Measure Number 1, page 37, to reduce the potential of a significant environmental impact.

⁵ California Air Resources Board, *2001 Estimate Annual Average Emissions, San Francisco County*, 2002.

Operations Emissions

Project operation would affect local air quality by increasing the number of vehicles on project-impacted roads and at the project site, and by introducing stationary emissions to the project site. Transportation sources, such as project-generated vehicles, would account for over 90 percent of operational project-related emissions. Stationary source emissions, generated by combustion of natural gas for building space and water heating, would be less-than-significant, due to the low amount of emission and the relative minimal amount of pollutants in natural gas combustion.

Pollutants can be classified as being local or regional pollutants. Local pollutants are relatively inert in the atmosphere, and concentrations are primarily determined by distance from the source. Regional pollutants undergo transformation in the atmosphere or may be formed in the atmosphere, so that concentrations are dependant on the total regional emissions and weather patterns rather than the actual location of the emissions. Carbon monoxide is a localized pollutant whose major source is automobiles, so concentrations of this gas are highest near intersections of major roads. Ozone is a regional pollutant that is produce photochemically, so concentrations are greatest at the furthest down-wind reaches of the region (Livermore Valley and southern Santa Clara Valley). PM₁₀ is both a local and regional pollutant, having both a relatively inert component and a photochemically-produced component.

Local Impacts

Of the criteria pollutants, the only one that has a localized effect is carbon monoxide. Project related traffic may result in areas with high concentrations of carbon monoxide around stagnation points such as major intersections and heavily traveled and congested highways. The BAAQMD has identified three criteria, any one of which would require the estimation of local carbon monoxide concentrations:⁶

- Project related vehicle CO emissions would exceed 550 pounds per day
- Project traffic would impact intersections or roadway links operating at Level of Service (LOS) D, E or F or would cause LOS to decline to D, E or F
- Project traffic would increase traffic volumes on nearby roadways by 10 percent or more.

A computer program, the URBEMIS-2001, developed by the California Air Resources Board, was applied to project daily trip generation under winter conditions (the time of maximum CO concentrations) to estimate total project-related carbon monoxide emissions. The resulting calculated emission of 188.1 pounds/day of carbon monoxide from project-generated vehicles would not exceed the BAAQMD criterion of 550 pounds/day. Project traffic would, however, contribute to the traffic delays at two intersections currently operating at LOS D. Therefore, since a BAAQMD criterion for modeling was met, the CO concentrations at the two qualifying intersections were estimated using a screening form of the computer model developed by the California Department of Transportation, CALINE-4.

⁶ IBID

CO concentrations are localized and strongly dependent on local traffic volumes and operating conditions. Table 1 below shows predicted one-hour and eight-hour averaged CO concentrations at the two study intersections that meet the BAAQMD criteria for modeling. The data is for worst cast intersections, at the edge of the curb immediately adjacent to traffic. Concentrations at other locations further from the roadway would be less than those shown in Table 1. For the study intersections, the estimated CO concentrations with project-generated traffic would be below the applicable state/federal standards (20 parts per million [ppm] for the 1-hour standard and 9 ppm for the 8-hour standard), and would be a less-than-significant impact.

Table 1 Existing and Projected Curbside Carbon Monoxide Concentrations at Selected Intersections*						
Intersection	Existing (2001)		Existing + Project (2001)		Cum. + Project (2015)	
	1-Hour	8-Hour	1-Hour	8-Hour	1-Hour	8-Hour
Van Ness/Hayes	9.8	6.6	9.8	6.6	7.1	4.8
Van Ness/Market	9.2	6.2	9.2	6.2	6.8	4.6
Most Stringent Standard	20.0	9.0	20.0	9.0	20.0	9.0

* Calculations were made using a screening procedure contained in the *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines*. Background concentrations of 6.3 ppm (1-hour) and 4.2 ppm (8-hour) were calculated using 1992 isopleths of carbon monoxide concentration and rollback factors for the year 2002 developed by the BAAQMD. Background concentrations of 5.2 ppm (1-hour) and 3.5 ppm (8-hour) were calculated using 1992 isopleths of carbon monoxide concentration and rollback factors for the year 2020 developed by the BAAQMD. The one-hour state standard is 20 ppm, the one-hour federal standard is 35 ppm, and the eight-hour state and federal standards are 9 ppm. Emission factors were derived from the California Air Resources Board EMFAC7G computer model (Version 1.0c).

Source: Don Ballanti, Certified Consulting Meteorologist.

Concentrations in 2020 would be below current levels, despite increased traffic, due to gradually declining emission rates for vehicles and background concentrations as older, more polluting vehicles are retired and replaced with lower-emitting vehicles.

Regional Impacts

Project traffic would also have an effect on air quality outside the project vicinity. Trips to and from the project would contribute to air pollutant emissions over the entire Bay Area. As noted above, the Bay Area is currently designated nonattainment for ozone and PM₁₀. The project associated emissions for two of the major ozone precursors (ROG and NO_x) and PM₁₀ were evaluated using the URBEMIS-2001 computer program. The daily increases in regional emissions from project generated auto travel are shown in Table 2 below. The proposed project would not exceed the BAAQMD established threshold of significance of 80 pounds per day for emissions of regional pollutants would not be considered to have a significant adverse environmental effect on air quality.

<p align="center">Table 2 Project Regional Emissions in Pounds Per Day*</p>			
	Reactive Hydrocarbons (ROG)	Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x)	Fine Particulate Matter (PM₁₀)
Project Daily Emission	18.5	22.3	7.2
BAAQMD Threshold	80.0	80.0	80.0

* Estimates of regional emissions generated by project traffic were made using a program called URBEMIS 2001. Inputs to the URBEMIS 2001 program include trip generation rates, vehicle mix, average trip length by trip type and average speed. Trip generation rates for project land uses were provided by the project transportation consultant. Average trip lengths and vehicle mixes for the Bay Area were used. Average speed for all types of trips was assumed to be 25 MPH, which represents a maximum level of emissions. The analysis assumed a year 2005 vehicle mix (estimate first year of project operation). The URBEMIS 2001 runs assumed summertime conditions for ROG, NO_x and PM₁₀ when ozone concentrations are maximum.

Source: Don Ballanti, Certified Consulting Meteorologist.

Shadow

The proposed State Compensation Insurance Fund building would be 11 stories tall, and would increase the amount of shadow on area streets and sidewalks and adjacent properties at certain times of the day and year. Section 295 of the *San Francisco Planning Code* was adopted in response to Proposition K (passed in November 1984) in order to protect certain public open spaces from shadowing by new structures during the period between one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset, year round. Section 295 restricts new shadow upon public spaces under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department by any structure exceeding 40 feet unless the Planning Commission finds the impact to be insignificant. The nearest public open spaces are the Civic Center Plaza and United Nations Plaza, one block north and one block northeast of the project site, respectively; and Howard-Langton Mini-Park, approximately one-third mile east of the site. To determine whether this project would conform with Section 295, a shadow fan analysis was prepared by the Planning Department. The results of the shadow analysis will be discussed in the EIR.

Wind

Wind conditions partly determine pedestrian comfort on sidewalks and in other public areas. In downtown areas, tall buildings can redirect wind flows around and down to street level, resulting in increased wind speed and turbulence at street level. The proposed building would be approximately 175 feet high (plus mechanical), with its long axis oriented northeast-southwest, parallel to Market Street. The building's frontage on Ninth Street and its northwest side would be the building faces most exposed to the winds from the west. A Wind Study will be conducted by a meteorological consultant under the supervision of the Planning Department. The study will address the impacts of wind generated by the proposed project, and the results of the study will be discussed in the EIR.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
7. <u>Utilities/Public Services</u> - Could the project:			
a. Breach published national, state or local standards relating to solid waste or litter control?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Extend a sewer trunk line with capacity to serve new development?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially increase demand for schools, recreation or other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Require major expansion of power, water, or communications facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would incrementally increase demand for and use of public services and utilities on the project site, but not in excess of amounts expected and provided for in the project area. The project would be undertaken in a fully built-out area of downtown San Francisco, where all services and utilities are currently provided. No need for any expansion of public service or utilities is anticipated.

The new building would be designed to incorporate water-conserving measures such as low-flush toilets and urinals, as required by California State Building Code Section 402.0©). The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) has passed a resolution⁷ that adopted City's Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) 2000 update, which is based on ABAG Year 2000 projections for development in San Francisco through 2020. The SFPUC's adopted UWMP accounts for all of the projected water demand in San Francisco as a result of foreseeable large developments and therefore the proposed project would not have a significant impact on water supply facilities.

In conclusion, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts on public services and utilities. Therefore, the EIR will not discuss public services and utilities.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
8. <u>Biology</u> - Could the project:			
a. Substantially affect a rare or endangered species of animal or plant, or the habitat of the species?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially diminish habitat for fish, wildlife or plants, or interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Require removal of substantial numbers of mature, scenic trees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

⁷ City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, Resolution No. 02-0084, adopted May 14, 2002.

Almost all of the project site is covered with impervious surfaces and it is located within an urban area which has been developed since the late nineteenth century. There are approximately 35 mature trees on the site, located mostly along the perimeter. However, no significant wildlife habitat exists on the site. Development on the site would remove most of these trees, with the exception of approximately 21 smaller trees along the northeast perimeter. This would not affect any significant plant or animal habitats or interfere with the movement of any resident or migratory animal species. The proposed project would include landscaping between the north facade of the project building and the 1275 Market Street building starting at Ninth Street and continuing to the central courtyard between the two buildings. The landscape plan calls for redwood and evergreen shrubs mixed with shade tolerant planting materials. Street trees would be planted every 20 feet along the site's Ninth and Laskie Street frontages as required by the *Planning Code*. The proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts on biology, and the EIR will not discuss biology.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
9. <u>Geology/Topography</u> - Could the project:			
a. Expose people or structures to major geologic hazards (slides, subsidence, erosion and liquefaction)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Change substantially the topography or any unique geologic or physical features of the site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The project site is relatively level, with the surface ranging from Elevation 44.5 to 46.0 feet. Based on borings taken in the course of a geotechnical investigation, the project site is underlain by six to 12 feet of loose to medium dense sand and medium stiff clay fill, which may extend deeper locally.⁸ The fill contains various amounts of clay, gravel, and debris, which may be related to the 1906 earthquake. Underlying the fill is medium dense to dense Dune sand that extends to depths ranging from 28 to 33.5 feet below the ground surface. This layer grades into dense to very dense silty and clayey sand, sandy clay, and sand of the Colma foundation, which extends to the maximum explored depth of 101.5 feet. Bedrock (consisting of weathered shale) was encountered at a depth of about 238 feet during the investigation for the adjacent State Compensation Insurance Fund headquarters building at 1275 Market Street. Groundwater depth was estimated to be approximately 30.5 feet below the ground surface (Elevation 15 feet). To allow for seasonal fluctuation (recognizing that the groundwater measurement was made at a dry time of the year), the geotechnical study recommends a design groundwater level of 25.5 feet below the ground surface (Elevation 20 feet).

To accommodate the proposed two basement levels and the building foundation, an excavation approximately 28 feet deep (assuming a foundation thickness of five feet) would be required. This corresponds to an approximate elevation of 17 feet, which would be approximately three feet below design groundwater level and very near the

⁸ Treadwell & Rollo, *Geotechnical Investigation, State Compensation Insurance Fund, 55 Ninth Street, San Francisco, California*, 8 October 2001. This report is available for public review by appointment in Project File No. 2001.1039E at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, fifth floor, San Francisco.

prevailing groundwater level. Because of the presence of groundwater, the site should be dewatered to maintain stability of the bottom of the excavation during construction. Any groundwater encountered during construction of the proposed project would be subject to requirements of the City's Industrial Waste Ordinance (Ordinance Number 199-77), requiring that groundwater meet specified water quality standards before it may be discharged into the sewer system. The Bureau of ~~Environmental Regulation and Management (BERM) Systems Planning, Environment and Compliance~~ of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission must be notified of projects necessitating dewatering, and may require water analysis before discharge. Should dewatering be necessary, the final soils report would address the potential settlement and subsidence impacts of this dewatering. Based upon this discussion, the report would contain a determination as to whether or not a lateral movement and settlement survey should be done to monitor any movement or settlement of surrounding buildings and adjacent streets. If a monitoring survey is recommended, the Department of Public Works would require that a Special Inspector (as defined in Article 3 of the Building Code) be retained by the project sponsor to perform this monitoring.

Groundwater observation wells would be installed to monitor potential settlement and subsidence. If, in the judgment of the Special Inspector, unacceptable movement were to occur during dewatering, groundwater recharge would be used to halt this settlement. The project sponsor would delay construction if necessary. Costs for the survey and any necessary repairs to service lines under the street would be borne by the project sponsor.

The *San Francisco General Plan Community Safety Element* contains maps that show areas in the City subject to geologic hazards. The project site is located in an area subject to groundshaking from earthquakes along the San Andreas and Northern Hayward faults and other faults in the San Francisco Bay Area (see Maps 2 and 3 in the Community Safety Element). The closest active faults are the San Andreas Fault, approximately 11.9 kilometers southwest of the project site, and the San Gregorio North Fault, about 16 kilometers west of the project site. As is the entire San Francisco Bay Area, the proposed project site is subject to groundshaking in the event of an earthquake on these faults, although surface rupture is not likely.

As mentioned above, the project sponsor has provided a geotechnical investigation report prepared by a California-licensed geotechnical engineer that is on file with the Department of City Planning and available for public review as part of the project file. The recommendations contained in the report include but are not limited to:

- Use of a waterproofed mat foundation
- Stripping, overexcavation if needed, and compaction of the subgrade soils
- Design of basement walls to resist lateral pressures of adjacent soil and vehicles
- Use of a temporary dewatering system, designed by a qualified dewatering contractor
- Shoring of the excavation with a soldier pile and lagging system using tiebacks
- Evaluation of required penetration depth of the soldier piles by the shoring designer
- Use of hand-excavated piers to underpin the adjacent two-story building to the southeast
- Use of tiedown anchors if the building weight is insufficient to overcome hydrostatic uplift
- Performance testing of tiedowns

- Monitoring of survey points on the shoring and adjacent streets and structures during construction
- Performance of a crack study of adjacent buildings before and after construction
- Seismic design in accordance with the 1998 San Francisco Building Code

The geotechnical report found the site suitable for development providing that the recommendations included in the report were incorporated into the design and construction of the proposed development. The sponsor has agreed to follow the recommendations of the report in constructing the project (Improvement Measure I).

The project site is located in an area of liquefaction potential (map 4), in a Seismic Hazards Study Zone (SHSZ) designated by the California Division of Mines and Geology. However, the geotechnical report concluded that, due to the density of the sand underlying the site, the risk of liquefaction at the site is considered low.

In any event, the final building plans would be reviewed by the Department of Building Inspection (DBI). In reviewing building plans, the DBI refers to a variety of information sources to determine existing hazards and assess requirements for mitigation. Sources reviewed include maps of Special Geologic Study Areas and known landslide areas in San Francisco as well as the building inspectors' working knowledge of areas of special geologic concern. The above referenced geotechnical investigation would be available for use by the DBI during its review of building permits for the site. Also, DBI could require that additional site-specific soils report(s) be prepared in conjunction with permit applications, as needed.

To ensure compliance with all San Francisco Building Code provisions regarding structural safety, when DBI reviews the geotechnical report and building plans for a proposed project, it will determine necessary engineering and design features for the project to reduce potential damage to structures from groundshaking and liquefaction. Therefore, potential damage to structures from geologic hazards on a project site would be mitigated through the DBI requirement for a geotechnical report and review of the building permit application pursuant to its implementation of the Building Code. The EIR will not address geology and soils.

The project site is not in an area subject to landslide, tsunami run-up, or reservoir inundation hazards (maps 5,6, and 7 in the Community Safety Element) and would not alter the topography of the site.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
10. <u>Water</u> - Could the project:			
a. Substantially degrade water quality, or contaminate a public water supply?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially degrade or deplete ground water resources, or interfere substantially with ground water recharge?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Cause substantial flooding, erosion or siltation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Regional groundwater flow in the area is assumed to be to the east, towards San Francisco Bay. As discussed in Section (9) Geology/Topography, above, groundwater depth was estimated to be approximately 30.5 feet below the ground surface at the site. Groundwater levels are anticipated to vary seasonally by a few feet, and a design groundwater level of 25.5 feet below the ground surface is recommended in the project's geotechnical report.⁹ The proposed 32-foot excavation would be approximately 2.5 feet below design groundwater level and very near the prevailing groundwater level. Thus, dewatering would be required (see Section (9) Geology/Topography, above, for further discussion). As discussed in Section (12) Hazards, Soil and Water Contamination, below, analytical results of two groundwater samples at the site indicate that discharge of water produced from construction dewatering to the combined sanitary sewer system should be acceptable to San Francisco Department of Public Works (SFPDWP). The Bureau of Environmental Regulation and Management (BERM) System Planning, Environment, and Compliance (SPEAC) of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission must be notified of projects necessitating dewatering, and may require groundwater analysis before discharge. Potential degradation of groundwater quality as a result of dewatering during project construction would be reduced to a less than significant level through BERM SPEAC requirement for retention of groundwater pumped from the project site in a holding tank, and analysis of the quality of this groundwater before it is discharged to the combined sanitary and storm drain sewer system.

Almost all of the project site is currently covered by impervious surfaces. Site drainage would be redesigned to take into account the below-grade structure, but site runoff would continue to drain to the City's combined storm and sanitary sewer and be treated at the Southeast Water Pollution Control Plant prior to discharge to San Francisco Bay. Wastewater treatment would be provided pursuant to the effluent discharge limitations set by the Plant's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. The foundation and portions of the building below grade would be water tight to avoid the need to permanently pump and discharge water. Natural groundwater flow would continue under and around the site. The project, therefore, would not substantially alter existing groundwater quality or flow conditions.

In conclusion, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts on surface water or groundwater quality. Therefore, the EIR will not discuss water.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
11. <u>Energy/Natural Resources</u> - Could the project:			
a. Encourage activities which result in the use of large amounts of fuel, water, or energy, or use these in a wasteful manner?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Have a substantial effect on the potential use, extraction, or depletion of a natural resource?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

⁹ Treadwell & Rollo, *Geotechnical Investigation, State Compensation Insurance Fund, 55 Ninth Street, San Francisco, California*, 8 October 2001. This report is available for public review by appointment in Project File No. 2001.1039E at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, fifth floor, San Francisco.

The Department of Building Inspection requires that the design of new buildings in San Francisco is required to conform to energy conservation standards specified by Title 24 of the *California Code of Regulations*. Documentation showing compliance with these standards is submitted with the application for the building permit. Title 24 is enforced by the Department of Building Inspection. Therefore, no further analysis of energy is required, and the EIR will not discuss energy.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
12. <u>Hazards</u> - Could the project:			
a. Create a potential public health hazard or involve the use, production or disposal of materials which pose a hazard to people or animal or plant populations in the area affected?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Interfere with emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Create a potentially substantial fire hazard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

This section addresses potential hazards on the project site, including Underground Storage Tanks (USTs), contaminants in the soils, and fire hazards.

A Phase I and Limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was conducted for the proposed project by Treadwell & Rollo in October 2001.¹⁰ The ESA, summarized below, describes the land use history of the project site and area that may have involved handling, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials that could have affected the quality of soils or groundwater, and analyzes soil and water samples taken on the site for the presence of chemically-affected soil or water on the project property.

Underground Storage Tanks

According to available historical information, the site was occupied by a service station and auto service center from at least 1949 until 1977 or earlier, indicating the possible presence of Underground Storage Tanks (USTs). Treadwell & Rollo requested a review of files at the San Francisco Fire Department and Department of Public Health, Local Oversight Program, but no records of any tank removal were located. A geophysical survey was performed at the entrance to the existing parking lot, where historical records indicate a UST was located. The results indicated two rectangular areas with anomalies, one of which is characteristic of a UST. Thus, it is very likely that a UST is located at the entrance to the existing parking lot. Implementation of Mitigation Measure Number 2(a) by the project sponsor in the Mitigation Measures section of this Initial Study would reduce potential impacts related to the presence of underground storage tanks to a less-than-significant level.

¹⁰ Treadwell & Rollo, *Phase I and Limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, 55 Ninth Street, San Francisco, California*, 23 October 2001. This report is available for public review by appointment in Project File No. 2001.1039E at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, fifth floor, San Francisco.

Soil and Water Contamination

The project site is underlain by six to 12 feet of loose to medium dense sand and medium stiff clay fill, which may extend deeper locally. The fill contains various amounts of clay, gravel, and debris. Underlying the fill is medium dense to dense Dune sand that extends to depths ranging from 28 to 33.5 feet below the ground surface. This layer grades into dense to very dense silty and clayey sand, sandy clay, and sand of the Colma foundation, which extends to the maximum explored depth of 101.5 feet. Groundwater depth was estimated to be approximately 30.5 feet below the ground surface at the site and a design groundwater level of 25.5 feet below the ground surface is recommended in the project's geotechnical report.¹¹

A site reconnaissance on 27 August 2001 found no evidence of significant staining, spillage, ponded liquids, and/or uncontained solids.

A search of federal and state hazardous materials databases was performed for the area within a one-eighth- to one-mile radius of the site. The information from the database search was supplemented and verified by conducting informal interviews with personnel of the San Francisco Fire Department and Department of Public Health, Local Oversight Program. The findings are summarized below.

The site itself is not listed in any of the databases reviewed. As discussed in Underground Storage Tanks, above, no records of any tank removal at the site were located, although historical information indicates that the site was occupied by a service station and auto service center from at least 1949 until 1977 or earlier.

Four nearby properties that are up-gradient or cross-gradient of the project site are listed in the databases reviewed. However, these properties' potential to affect environmental conditions at the project site is considered less than significant.

A limited subsurface soil investigation was conducted as part of the Phase I and Limited Phase II ESA to assess the presence of regulated chemical compounds in the fill soil and groundwater beneath the site. Six soil borings were drilled to depths ranging from 11.5 to 30 feet below ground surface at locations throughout the site in August 2001. A total of 18 soil samples, collected at various depths from the six borings, was submitted for laboratory analysis. The samples were analyzed for some or all of the following constituents:

- total petroleum hydrocarbons as gasoline (TPH(g)) and diesel (TPH(d)),
- total recoverable petroleum hydrocarbons (TRPH),
- benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylenes (BTEX),
- methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE),
- semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs),

¹¹ Treadwell & Rollo, *Geotechnical Investigation, State Compensation Insurance Fund, 55 Ninth Street, San Francisco, California*, 8 October 2001. This report is available for public review by appointment in Project File No. 2001.1039E at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, fifth floor, San Francisco.

- halogenated volatile organic compounds (HVOCs),
- total lead, and
- leaking underground fuel tank (LUFT) 5 metals (cadmium, chromium, nickel, lead, and zinc).

Soil samples with elevated concentrations of total lead (greater than 50 parts per million) were also analyzed for soluble lead.

Groundwater samples collected from two of the borings were analyzed for:

- total petroleum hydrocarbons as gasoline (TPH(g)) and diesel (TPH(d)),
- total recoverable petroleum hydrocarbons (TRPH),
- benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylenes (BTEX),
- methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE),
- semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs),
- halogenated volatile organic compounds (HVOCs),
- total lead,
- total suspended solids, and
- chemical oxygen demand.

These parameters chosen were based on the discharge requirements of the San Francisco Department of Public Works (SFDPW) for water disposal into the combined sanitary sewer system.

Total recoverable petroleum hydrocarbons (TRPH) were detected in shallow soil samples at concentrations ranging from 29 to 880 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) or ppm. Diesel was detected at low concentrations of 3.4 ppm to 36 ppm in seven of the 14 samples analyzed. Low levels of gasoline were detected at concentrations of 1.2 ppm to 17 ppm in four of the 14 samples analyzed. BTEX compounds were detected in seven of the 14 samples analyzed at maximum concentrations of 1.6 ppm for benzene, 1.8 ppm for toluene, 0.2 ppm for ethylbenzene, and 0.97 ppm for total xylenes. No MTBE, SVOCs, or HVOCs were detected at or above the analytical method reporting limits in the soil samples analyzed.

Elevated levels of lead were detected in 13 of the 14 soil samples analyzed, at concentrations ranging from 4.4 to 560 ppm. Five samples with elevated levels of total lead (above 50 ppm) were analyzed for soluble lead using the Soluble Threshold Limit Concentration (STLC) by California Waste Extraction Test (WET) method and Federal Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Potential (TCLP) analyses. These soluble lead analyses were performed to assess if lead concentrations in select soil samples exceeded State and/or Federal hazardous waste levels. STLC lead was detected in the five selected samples analyzed, at concentrations ranging from 7.7 to 27 mg/L. TCLP lead was detected in one of the five samples analyzed at a concentration of 4.9 ppm.

Construction of the proposed new building at 55 Ninth Street would entail excavation of about 37,000 cubic yards of soil. The ESA concluded that, because of the lead contamination discussed above as well as elevated levels of chromium, nickel, and zinc found in some samples, the fill in the southern corner of the site to a depth of two feet

below ground surface would likely require disposal at a regulated Class I hazardous waste landfill. Fill material in the southern corner below two feet below ground surface, and fill near the middle of the site and the middle of the site's frontage along Ninth Street, is likely to be acceptable for disposal at a Class II landfill. Other areas of the site may or may not be underlain by fill classified as hazardous waste. The Dune sand beneath the fill material did not contain any elevated concentrations of lead or petroleum hydrocarbons and its disposal would not be regulated. Because hazardous materials were detected in the soils on the site, a Site Mitigation Plan (SMP) and a Health and Safety (H&S) Plan would be required prior to construction. The project sponsor has agreed to implement Mitigation Measure Number 2(b) in the Mitigation Measures section of the Initial Study, which would ensure that any potential impacts due to the presence of petroleum hydrocarbons, heavy metals, or other hazardous materials in soils on the project site would be reduced to a less than significant level.

Testing of the two groundwater samples found low levels of diesel, at concentrations of 840 and 180 micrograms per liter (ug/l) or parts per billion (ppb), respectively. These analytical results were within quantitative range for the reported analyses, but the chromatographic pattern was not typical of fuel. TPH as gasoline was detected in one groundwater sample at a concentration of 270 ppb. SVOCs including bis(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate and di-n-butylphthalate were detected in one boring, at concentrations of 16 and 18 ppb, respectively. Total suspended solids (TSS) and chemical oxygen demand (COD) were detected in the one groundwater sample, at a concentration of 30 ppm and 40 ppm, respectively. No BTEX, MTBE, TRPH, HVOCs, or total lead was detected at or above method reporting limits. Based on the analytical results of the two groundwater samples, discharge of water produced from construction dewatering to the combined sanitary sewer system would be acceptable to SFDPW.

Fire Hazards

San Francisco ensures fire safety primarily through provisions of the Building Code and the Fire Code. Existing buildings are required to meet standards contained in these codes. The proposed project would conform to these standards, including development of an emergency procedure manual and an exit drill plan. Occupants of the proposed building would contribute to congestion if an emergency evacuation of the Mid-Market area were required. Section 12.202(e)(1) of the San Francisco Fire Code requires that all owners of high-rise buildings (over 75 feet) "shall establish or cause to be established procedures to be followed in case of fire or other emergencies. All such procedures shall be reviewed and approved by the chief of division." Additionally, project construction would have to conform to the provisions of the Building and Fire Codes which require additional life-safety protections for high-rise buildings. In this way, potential fire hazards (including those associated with hydrant water pressure and emergency access) would be mitigated during the permit review process.

In conclusion, potential public health and safety hazards related to the possible presence of underground storage tanks, soil contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbons and heavy metals on the project site, and potential fire hazards in the new building would be reduced to a less than significant level as a result of regulations and procedures already established as part of the review process for building permits and mitigation proposed as part of the project. Therefore, the EIR will not discuss hazards.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
13. <u>Cultural</u> - Could the project:			
a. Disrupt or adversely affect a prehistoric or historic archaeological site or a property of historic or cultural significance to a community, ethnic or social group; or a paleontological site except as a part of a scientific study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with established recreational, educational, religious or scientific uses of the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Conflict with the preservation of buildings subject to the provisions of Article 10 or (proposed) Article 11 of the City Planning Code?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Prehistoric and Historic Archaeological Resources

A cultural resources evaluation of the project site was completed by an independent consultant and is summarized here.¹²

No prehistoric resources exist within the present project site, but the site has not been subject to previous archaeological investigation. Available documentary evidence suggests the possibility that significant prehistoric archaeological resources may be within the subject property. Previous research in San Francisco suggests that the project site was near what early maps and archaeological evidence indicate would have represented a favorable habitat for Native American hunters and gatherers. The presence of deeply buried prehistoric cultural deposits as near as one block from the site indicates that prehistoric resources may be present within the project site at depths that are not easily predictable.

Archival resources indicate that there is little likelihood of recovering cultural resources from the Spanish, Mexican, or Early American periods. These archival data indicate that between 1776 and 1852, the project site remained in a natural state, unoccupied and, for the most part, undeveloped. The presence of the Mission Plank Road (modern day Mission Street) was the one major man-made alteration to the landscape. This thoroughfare, constructed in 1851 as a private toll road, ran along the present alignment of Mission Street from Third Street as far as 15th Street. There is the possibility that travelers utilizing this roadway may have visited the project site, but there is no indication of historic period occupation of the site until c.1857.

There is a distinct possibility that Gold Rush and/or Later Nineteenth Century cultural resources may lie buried below the ground surface of the site. The report concludes that, based on the body of archival documentation examined and assessed during the course of the present research, there is a potential for significant subsurface archaeological resources to be present within the project site that could be adversely impacted by the proposed

¹² Allen G. Pastron, PhD., *Archival Cultural Resources Evaluation of the Proposed State Compensation Insurance Fund Project, 55 Ninth Street, San Francisco, California*, June 2001.

project. Based on the available documentary evidence and the project site’s historical topographic and ecological features, there is a strong possibility that archaeological resources may be present within the project site that would be potentially eligible under criterion D (yielding, or likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history) for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources. Construction of the proposed project would require excavation of approximately 37,000 cubic yards of soil, and would be to a depth of approximately 45 feet. Given the potential presence of archaeological resources on the site, a program of pre-construction archaeological testing and evaluation is recommended to determine the presence or absence of subsurface archaeological resources, as identified in Mitigation Measure No. 3, pages 37 to 42. This Mitigation Measure would reduce impacts on significant archaeological resources to a less than significant level, and archaeological resources will not be discussed further in the EIR.

Historic Architectural Resources

The project site is an existing surface parking lot with approximately 173 parking spaces. The project site is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places, Article 10 of the *Planning Code* (which concerns sites such as designated City Landmarks and buildings within Historic Districts), or Article 11 of the *Planning Code* (which involves rating buildings for their architectural significance). The San Francisco Merchandise Mart building at 1301 Market Street, located across Ninth Street from the proposed project site, is rated Category I building under Article 11 of the *Planning Code*. However, the proposed project would not alter or have any substantial effect on this rated building. Therefore, the proposed project would not have any significant impact on architectural or historical resources and this environmental topic will not be discussed further in the EIR.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
C. OTHER			
Require approval and/or permits from City Departments other than the Planning Department or Department of Building Inspection or from Regional, State or Federal Agencies?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would require approval from the Department of Public Works for the merging of two lots.

D. MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED AS PART OF THE PROJECT

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
1. Could the project have significant effect if mitigation measures are not included in the project?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Are all mitigation measures necessary to eliminate significant effects included in the project?			<u>To be Determined</u>	

The following mitigation measures are related to topics determined to require no further analysis in the EIR. These mitigation measures are necessary to avoid or reduce potential significant effects of the project and would be included in the project by the project sponsor. The EIR will contain a Mitigation Measures chapter which describes these measures and includes other measures which would or could be adopted to reduce potential adverse effects of the project identified in the EIR.

The project sponsor has agreed to implement the following mitigation measures:

Mitigation Measure 1

Construction Air Quality: The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) to spray the project site with water during demolition, excavation, grading, and site preparation activities; spray unpaved construction areas with water at least twice per day; cover stockpiles of soil, sand, and other such material; cover trucks hauling debris, soils, sand or other such material; and sweep surrounding streets during these periods at least once per day to reduce particulate emissions. Ordinance 175-91, passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, the project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) to obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose.

The project sponsor shall require the project contractor(s) to maintain and operate construction equipment so as to minimize exhaust emissions of particulates and other pollutants, by such means as prohibiting idling motors when equipment is not in use or when trucks are waiting in queues, and implementing specific maintenance programs to reduce emissions for equipment that would be in frequent use for much of the construction period.

Mitigation Measure 2(a)

Hazards (Underground Storage Tanks): The project sponsor shall evaluate the presence of the suspected UST located at the entrance to the existing parking lot on the site. If a UST is found, it shall be removed by the project sponsor, and all work shall be conducted in accordance with regulatory requirements. In the case a UST is found, surrounding soils shall be tested, and any soil found to be contaminated at or above potentially hazardous levels shall be handled and disposed in accordance with Mitigation Measure No. 2(b), below.

Mitigation Measure 2(b)

Hazards (Contaminated Soil):

Step 1: Preparation of Site Mitigation Plan:

If, based on the results of the soil tests conducted, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) determines that the soils on the project site are contaminated with lead or other contaminants at or above potentially hazardous levels, the DPH shall determine if preparation of a Site Mitigation Plan (SMP) is warranted. If such a plan is requested by the DPH, the SMP shall include a discussion of the level of contamination of soils on the project site and mitigation measures for managing contaminated soils on the site, including, but not limited to: 1) the alternatives for managing contaminated soils on the site (e.g., encapsulation, partial or complete removal, treatment, recycling for reuse, or a combination); 2) the preferred

alternative for managing contaminated soils on the site and a brief justification; and 3) the specific practices to be used to handle, haul, and dispose of contaminated soils on the site. The SMP shall be submitted to the DPH for review and approval. A copy of the SMP shall be submitted to the Planning Department to become part of the case file.

Step 2: Handling, Hauling, and Disposal of Contaminated Soils

- (a) specific work practices: If based on the results of the soil tests conducted, DPH determines that the soils on the project site are contaminated with lead or other contaminants at or above potentially hazardous levels, the construction contractor shall be alert for the presence of such soils during excavation and other construction activities on the site (detected through soil odor, color, and texture and results of on-site soil testing), and shall be prepared to handle, profile (i.e., characterize), and dispose of such soils appropriately (i.e., as dictated by local, state, and federal regulations, including OSHA lead-safe work practices) when such soils are encountered on the site.
- (b) dust suppression: Soils exposed during excavation for site preparation and project construction activities shall be kept moist throughout the time they are exposed, both during and after work hours.
- (c) surface water runoff control: Where soils are stockpiled, visqueen shall be used to create an impermeable liner, both beneath and on top of the soils, with a berm to contain any potential surface water runoff from the soil stockpiles during inclement weather.
- (d) soils replacement: If necessary, clean fill or other suitable material(s) shall be used to bring portions of the project site, where contaminated soils have been excavated and removed, up to construction grade.
- (e) hauling and disposal: Contaminated soils shall be hauled off the project site by waste hauling trucks appropriately certified with the State of California and adequately covered to prevent dispersion of the soils during transit, and shall be disposed of at a permitted hazardous waste disposal facility registered with the State of California.

Step 3: Preparation of Closure/Certification Report

After excavation and foundation construction activities are completed, the project sponsor shall prepare and submit a closure/certification report to DPH for review and approval. The closure/certification report shall include the mitigation measures in the SMP for handling and removing contaminated soils from the project site, whether the construction contractor modified any of these mitigation measures, and how and why the construction contractor modified those mitigation measures.

Mitigation Measure 3

Cultural Resources: Based on a reasonable presumption that archeological resources may be present within the project site, the following measures shall be undertaken to avoid any potentially significant adverse effect from the proposed project on buried or submerged historical resources. The project sponsor shall retain the services of a qualified archeological consultant having expertise in California prehistoric and urban historical archeology. The

archeological consultant shall undertake an archeological testing program as specified herein. In addition, the consultant shall be available to conduct an archeological monitoring and/or data recovery program if required pursuant to this measure. The archeological consultant's work shall be conducted in accordance with this measure at the direction of the Environmental Review Officer (ERO). All plans and reports prepared by the consultant as specified herein shall be submitted first and directly to the ERO for review and comment, and shall be considered draft reports subject to revision until final approval by the ERO. Archeological monitoring and/or data recovery programs required by this measure could suspend construction of the project for up to a maximum of four weeks. At the direction of the ERO, the suspension of construction can be extended beyond four weeks only if such a suspension were the only feasible means to reduce to a less than significant level potential effects on a significant archeological resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Sect. 15064.5 (a)(c).

Archeological Testing Program. The archeological consultant shall prepare and submit to the ERO for review and approval an archeological testing plan (ATP). The archeological testing program shall be conducted in accordance with the approved ATP. The ATP shall identify the property types of the expected archeological resource(s) that potentially could be adversely affected by the proposed project, the testing method to be used, and the locations recommended for testing. The purpose of the archeological testing program will be to determine to the extent possible the presence or absence of archeological resources and to identify and to evaluate *as an historical resource* any archeological resource presumed to be within the site.

- At the completion of the archeological testing program, the archeological consultant shall submit a written report of the findings to the ERO. If based on the archeological testing program the archeological consultant finds that significant archeological resources may be present, the ERO in consultation with the archeological consultant shall determine if additional measures are warranted. Additional measures that may be undertaken include additional archeological testing, archeological monitoring, and/or an archeological data recovery program. If the ERO determines that a significant archeological resource were present and that the resource could be adversely affected by the proposed project, at the discretion of the project sponsor either:
 - A. The proposed project shall be re-designed so as to avoid any adverse effect on the significant archeological resource; or
 - B. A data recovery program shall be implemented, unless the ERO determines that the archeological resource is of greater interpretive than research significance and that interpretive use of the resource is feasible.

Archeological Monitoring Program. If the ERO in consultation with the archeological consultant determines that an archeological monitoring program shall be implemented the archeological monitoring program shall minimally include the following provisions:

- The archeological consultant, project sponsor, and ERO shall meet and consult on the scope of the AMP reasonably prior to any project-related soils disturbing activities commencing. The ERO in consultation with the archeological consultant shall determine what project activities shall be archeologically

monitored. In most cases, any soils- disturbing activities, such as demolition, foundation removal, excavation, grading, utilities installation, foundation work, driving of piles (foundation, shoring, etc.), site remediation, etc., shall require archeological monitoring because of the risk these activities pose to potential archaeological resources and to their depositional context;

- The archeological consultant shall advise all project contractors to be on the alert for evidence of the presence of the expected resource(s), of how to identify the evidence of the expected resource(s), and of the appropriate protocol in the event of apparent discovery of an archeological resource;
- The archeological monitor(s) shall be present on the project site according to a schedule agreed upon by the archeological consultant and the ERO until the ERO has, in consultation with project archeological consultant, determined that project construction activities could have no effects on significant archeological deposits;
- The archeological monitor shall record and be authorized to collect soil samples and artifactual/ecofactual material as warranted for analysis;
- If an intact archeological deposit is encountered, all soils-disturbing activities in the vicinity of the deposit shall cease. The archeological monitor shall be empowered to temporarily redirect demolition/excavation/pile driving/construction activities and equipment until the deposit is evaluated. If in the case of pile driving activity (foundation, shoring, etc.), the archeological monitor has cause to believe that the pile driving activity may affect an archeological resource, the pile driving activity shall be terminated until an appropriate evaluation of the resource has been made in consultation with the ERO. The archeological consultant shall immediately notify the ERO of the encountered archeological deposit. The archeological consultant shall make a reasonable effort to assess the identity, integrity, and significance of the encountered archeological deposit, and present the findings of this assessment to the ERO.

Whether or not significant archeological resources are encountered, the archeological consultant shall submit a written report of the findings of the monitoring program to the ERO.

Archeological Data Recovery Program. The archeological data recovery program shall be conducted in accord with an archeological data recovery plan (ADRP). The archeological consultant, project sponsor, and ERO shall meet and consult on the scope of the ADRP prior to preparation of a draft ADRP. The archeological consultant shall submit a draft ADRP to the ERO. The ADRP shall identify how the proposed data recovery program will preserve the significant information the archeological resource is expected to contain. That is, the ADRP will identify what scientific/historical research questions are applicable to the expected resource, what data classes the resource is expected to possess, and how the expected data classes would address the applicable research questions. Data recovery, in general, should be limited to the portions of the historical property that could be adversely affected by the proposed project. Destructive data recovery methods shall not be applied to portions of the archeological resources if nondestructive methods are practical.

The scope of the ADRP shall include the following elements:

- *Field Methods and Procedures.* Descriptions of proposed field strategies, procedures, and operations.
- *Cataloguing and Laboratory Analysis.* Description of selected cataloguing system and artifact analysis procedures.
- *Discard and Deaccession Policy.* Description of and rationale for field and post-field discard and deaccession policies.
- *Interpretive Program.* Consideration of an on-site/off-site public interpretive program during the course of the archeological data recovery program.
- *Security Measures.* Recommended security measures to protect the archeological resource from vandalism, looting, and non-intentionally damaging activities.
- *Final Report.* Description of proposed report format and distribution of results.
- *Curation.* Description of the procedures and recommendations for the curation of any recovered data having potential research value, identification of appropriate curation facilities, and a summary of the accession policies of the curation facilities.

Human Remains and Associated or Unassociated Funerary Objects. The treatment of human remains and of associated or unassociated funerary objects discovered during any soils disturbing activity shall comply with applicable State and Federal laws. This shall include immediate notification of the Coroner of the City and County of San Francisco and in the event of the Coroner's determination that the human remains are Native American remains, notification of the California State Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) who shall appoint a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) (Pub. Res. Code Sec. 5097.98). The archeological consultant, project sponsor, and MLD shall make all reasonable efforts to develop an agreement for the treatment of, with appropriate dignity, human remains and associated or unassociated funerary objects (CEQA Guidelines. Sec. 15064.5(d)). The agreement should take into consideration the appropriate excavation, removal, recordation, analysis, custodianship, curation, and final disposition of the human remains and associated or unassociated funerary objects.

Final Archeological Resources Report. The archeological consultant shall submit a Draft Final Archeological Resources Report (FARR) to the ERO that evaluates the historical significance of any discovered archeological resource and describes the archeological and historical research methods employed in the archeological testing/monitoring/data recovery program(s) undertaken. Information that may put at risk any archeological resource shall be provided in a separate removable insert within the final report.

Once approved by the ERO, copies of the FARR shall be distributed as follows: California Archaeological Site Survey Northwest Information Center (NWIC) shall receive one (1) copy and the ERO shall receive a copy of the transmittal of the FARR to the NWIC. The Major Environmental Analysis division of the Planning Department shall

receive three copies of the FARR along with copies of any formal site recordation forms (CA DPR 523 series) and/or documentation for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places/California Register of Historical Resources. In instances of high public interest in or the high interpretive value of the resource, the ERO may require a different final report content, format, and distribution than that presented above.

E. IMPROVEMENT MEASURES

Improvement measures diminish effects of the project that were found through the environmental analysis to be less-than significant impacts.

Improvement Measure 1

Construction Noise: Out of respect for nearby worship activities, no construction activities would occur on Sundays from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Improvement Measure 2

Geotechnical Report Recommendations: The project sponsor shall incorporate the recommendations in the conclusions of the Geotechnical Investigation Report on the project site.

F. ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives to the proposed project will be defined further and described in the EIR. At a minimum, the alternatives analyzed in the EIR will include the following:

1. A No Project Alternative, in which the project site would remain in its existing parking condition.
2. A Code-Conforming Alternative, in which the proposed uses would be at a lower level of intensity that would comply with existing height and bulk restrictions.

G. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
1. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or pre-history?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Does the project have possible environmental effects which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (Analyze in the light of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Would the project cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

H. ON THE BASIS OF THIS INITIAL STUDY

- ☐ I find the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared by the Department of City Planning.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there WILL NOT be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures in the discussion have been included as part of the proposed project. A NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

Date: 11/30/02

Paul E. Maltzer, for

PAUL E. MALTZER
Environmental Review Officer
for
Gerald G. Green
Director of Planning

Appendix B

Wind Tunnel Study

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

TO: **Stu During**
 During Associates
 120 Montgomery Street, Suite 2290
 San Francisco, CA 94104

FROM: **Charles Bennett**
 Environmental Science Associates
 225 Bush Street, Suite 1700
 San Francisco, CA 94104

DATE: **May 13, 2002**

SUBJECT: **Potential Wind Conditions**
 Proposed 55 Ninth Street Building
 San Francisco, California
 ESA 201480

I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Wind-tunnel tests were performed for the new building addition at 55 Ninth Street to the State Compensation building located at 1275 Market Street, on the full block bounded by Market, Ninth, Mission, and Eighth Streets, in the City of San Francisco. The tests were performed in order to define the pedestrian wind environment that would exist around the proposed project, and to determine the effects of cumulative developments in the vicinity of the proposed project on these wind conditions. Pedestrian-level wind speeds were measured at selected points for the site as it presently exists, for the proposed project in the existing setting, and the proposed project in the cumulative development setting that includes the potential addition of infill development along Jessie Street, between Tenth and Ninth Streets. This was done to quantify resulting pedestrian-level winds in public spaces near the proposed project.

Details of the background and test methods are presented in Section II, Background of this memorandum. Test results and discussion is presented in Section III, Study Results, and Section IV summarizes the findings and conclusions. An overview of the test results and conclusions follows.

Summaries of Tests

Test 1: Existing Setting

The existing setting consists generally of the existing buildings in the vicinity of the site. Development in the vicinity is characterized by a combination of some low-rise buildings and vacant land, with several mid- and high-rise structures fronting Market Street and interspersed throughout the area. Some of the more notable mid- and high-rise buildings include the CSAA building on Van Ness Avenue between Fell and Hayes Streets, the Fox Plaza building on Market Street between Polk and Hayes Streets, and the Bank of America data center building on Market Street between Tenth and Eleventh Streets.

Some of the existing conditions are among the windiest in San Francisco. The average wind speed for all 30 test points in this general vicinity would be slightly above 14 mph. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more occur at 17 of the total 30 locations. Of the remaining locations, 9 meet the Planning Code's pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11 mph. The highest wind speeds in the vicinity (23 mph) occur northwest¹ of the site, at the southernmost corner of Fox Plaza, near the intersection of Market and Polk Streets (#21).

The Code's wind hazard criterion is currently exceeded at 7 of the 30 test locations; the total duration of the exceedance is 210 hours per year.

Winds in the vicinity of the site are strongly influenced by the presence of the Fox Plaza building located on Market Street, between Polk and Hayes Streets, one block northwest of the site. The Bank of America, CSAA, and Fox Plaza buildings interact to create very strong, turbulent winds at and near ground levels at the bases of the buildings and generally within a several block radius of the triangular area roughly outlined by the three buildings.

Furthermore, prior wind test have shown that the wind conditions in this area are chaotic – the locations of the exceedances can be moved and their durations can be substantially altered by relatively small changes in the configuration of buildings or the addition of buildings to vacant properties within a block of the high-rise buildings in this area.

Test 2: Project in the Existing Setting

The project scenario consists of the 55 Ninth Street project added to the existing setting buildings.

With the project, wind conditions would be slightly less windy; the average wind speed for all 30 test points would decrease slightly, but would equal 14 mph. Wind speeds in pedestrian areas would range from 9 to 23 mph. The project would eliminate the existing pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedance located at the southeast corner of the Ninth and Market Streets intersection, and would create 2 new exceedances downwind of the site along the eastern side of Ninth Street. Eight of the total 30 points would meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

With the project, as compared to existing conditions, wind speeds would increase at 9 locations, remain unchanged at 11 locations and decrease at 10 locations. The highest wind speeds in the vicinity (23 mph) would continue to occur northwest of the project site, at the southernmost corner of the Fox Plaza building, near the intersection of Market and Polk Streets.

The project would create 2 new wind hazard exceedances, eliminate 4 existing exceedances, and decrease the durations of 3 existing exceedances. Overall, the total duration would be 188 hours per year, a decrease of about 22 hours per year in existing hazard exceedances.

Project Mitigation Measures

The project would eliminate 1 existing pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedance, and create 2 new

¹ Directional references in the text use Ninth Street as local north-south and Market Street as local east-west. References to winds always use the true compass directions from which the wind blows.

exceedances, for a net total of 22 pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances.

The project would also create 2 new wind hazard exceedances, eliminate 4 existing exceedances, and decrease the duration of 3 existing exceedances. Overall, the project would reduce the total duration of wind hazard exceedances in the vicinity.

Given the existing windy conditions of the site and vicinity and the magnitude of changes in wind conditions that can reasonably be expected from the project, it is not believed possible to design any structure that fully meets the goals of the project and which fully reduces ambient wind speeds to meet Section 148 comfort and hazard criteria at all locations in the vicinity of the site.

The addition of large street trees (30-40 feet wide and 40-50 feet tall) along the Ninth Street sidewalk adjacent to the project site could noticeably reduce wind speeds that would occur in pedestrian areas. However, street trees would not necessarily provide sufficient wind speed reductions to eliminate the two new exceedances of the pedestrian-comfort criterion or the two new exceedances of the wind hazard criterion.

Given that several low structures and some vacant lands now exist to the northwest and west across Market Street, further development of upwind buildings to the height and bulk limits of the Zoning would be expected to reduce the speeds for the northwest, west-northwest, and west winds reaching the project, and thus reduce the wind speeds on sidewalks around and downwind of the project.

Future infill development on available vacant lands south of Jessie Street between Ninth and Tenth Streets to the height and bulk limits of the Zoning would be expected to reduce the speeds for the southwest winds reaching the project site, as shown in Test 3, below.

Test 3: Cumulative Development Within the Vicinity of the Project Site

The cumulative development scenario consists of the 55 Ninth Street project and the potential infill development along Jessie Street, between Tenth and Ninth Streets.

With the project and the infill development, wind speeds would range from 8 to 23 mph. The average wind speed for all 30 points would decrease by less than 1 mph, although the wind speed would remain near 14 mph. Nine of the 30 test points would meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion value. The cumulative mid-rise development would eliminate 2 pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances, and add 1 new pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedance to the project setting.

With the cumulative development, as compared to project conditions, wind speeds would increase at 5 locations, decrease at 11 locations and remain unchanged at 14 locations. The highest wind speed in the vicinity (23 mph) would continue to occur at the southernmost corner of the Fox Plaza building, northwest of the project site.

Compared to project conditions, the Code's wind hazard criterion would continue to be exceeded at four of the total 30 test locations. The total duration of these 4 exceedances would be 141 hours per year.

The addition of the infill development to the project setting would eliminate 1 of the 2 new hazard exceedance locations created by the project, and would decrease the durations of 4 existing hazard exceedances by 46 hours per year.

Overall, the total duration of the wind hazard exceedances with the addition of the infill development would be 141 hours per year, a decrease of about 47 hours per year from the 188 hours per year duration of the wind hazard exceedances in the project setting.

II. BACKGROUND

Tall buildings and structures can strongly affect the wind environment for pedestrians. In cities, groups of structures tend to slow the winds near ground level, due to the friction and drag of the structures themselves. Buildings that are much taller than the surrounding buildings intercept and redirect winds that might otherwise flow overhead, and bring them down the vertical face of the building to ground level, where they create ground-level wind and turbulence. These redirected winds can be relatively strong and also relatively turbulent, and can be incompatible with the intended uses of nearby ground-level spaces.

In the project area, the general openness of the upwind area allows strong winds to reach the site and vicinity. However, the high-rise Fox Plaza building on Market and Polk Streets, combined with the CSAA building at Van Ness Avenue and the Bank of America Building at Market and Eleventh Streets effectively intercept and redirect these overhead winds, resulting in wind hazard conditions at pedestrian levels nearby. Any substantive structure placed on the currently vacant site might be able to intercept the strong winds that exist and could contribute to ground-level winds that may prove to be hazardous to pedestrians. Wind-tunnel testing is necessary to determine whether or not unsuitably strong winds would be present after a project is built.

Existing Climate and Wind Conditions

Average winds speeds in San Francisco are the highest in the summer and lowest in winter. However, the strongest peak winds occur in winter. The highest average wind speeds occur in mid-afternoon and the lowest in the early morning. Westerly to northwesterly winds are the most frequent and strongest winds during all seasons. Of the 16 primary wind directions, four have the greatest frequency of occurrence and subsequently make up the majority of the strong winds that occur. These winds include the northwest, west-northwest, west and west-southwest winds.

Data describing the speed, direction, and frequency of occurrence of winds were gathered at the old San Francisco Federal Building at 50 United Nations Plaza (at a height of 132 ft.) during the six-year period, 1945 to 1950. Measurements taken hourly and averaged over one-minute periods have been tabulated for each month (averaged over the six years) in three-hour periods using seven classes of wind speed and 16 compass directions. Analysis of these data shows that during the hours from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., about 70% of all winds blow from five of the 16 directions as follows: Northwest (NW), 10%; West-Northwest (WNW), 14%; West (W), 35%; West-Southwest (WSW), 2%; Southwest (SW), 9%; and all other winds, 28%. Calm conditions occur 2% of the time. More than 90% of measured winds over 13 mph blow from the NW, WNW, W, WSW, or SW.

Wind Speed and Pedestrian Comfort²

The comfort of pedestrians varies under different conditions of sun exposure, temperature, clothing, and wind speed. Winds up to four miles per hour (mph) have no noticeable effect on pedestrian comfort. With winds from four to eight mph, wind is felt on the face. Winds from eight to thirteen mph will disturb hair, cause clothing to flap, and extend a light flag mounted on a pole. Winds from 13 to 19 mph will raise loose paper, dust and dry soil, and will disarrange hair. For winds from 19 to 26 mph, the force of the wind will be felt on the body. With 26 to 34 mph winds, umbrellas are used with difficulty, hair is blown straight, there is difficulty in walking steadily, and wind noise is unpleasant. Winds over 34 mph increase difficulty with balance and gusts can blow people over.

City Planning Code Requirements

This project is located in an area that is subject to the City Planning Code Section 148, Reduction of Ground-Level Wind Currents in the Downtown Commercial (C-3) District. The City Planning Code specifically outlines these wind reduction criteria for the Downtown Commercial (C-3) District. This analysis is performed using the wind testing, analysis and evaluation methods to determine conformity with the Code; these requirements are described in Section 148 of the Planning Code.

The Planning Code requires buildings to be shaped so as not to cause ground-level wind currents to exceed, more than 10% of the time, 11 mph in substantial pedestrian use areas, and 7 mph in public seating areas. Similarly, the Code requires that buildings not cause equivalent wind speeds to reach or exceed the hazard level of 26 mph as averaged for a single full hour of the year, or 0.011416% of the time. These comfort criteria are based on wind speeds that are measured for one minute and averaged. In contrast, the hazard criterion is based on winds that are measured for one hour and averaged; when stated on the same basis as the comfort criteria winds, the hazard criterion speed is a one-minute average of 36 mph³. The wind ordinance is defined in terms of equivalent wind speed⁴. This term denotes an average wind speed (mean velocity), adjusted to include the level of gustiness and turbulence.

Model and Wind Testing Protocols

A 1 inch to 50 foot scale model of the Project site and surrounding several blocks was constructed in order to simulate the Project and its existing and future contexts. The scale model of the Project and surrounding area was provided by ESA. The Project design was configured from plans provided by the project architects; HOK Architects. The test model was constructed by ESA. The scale models were then tested in a boundary layer wind-tunnel facility at the University of California, Davis, under the direction of Dr. Bruce White. These tests, however, were performed independent of the University.

The first wind-tunnel tests were conducted for three configurations: 1) the Existing Setting, 2) the Project in the Existing Setting and 3) the Project in the Cumulative Development Setting. In accordance with the protocol for wind-tunnel testing in Section 148 of the Planning Code, each configuration was wind-tunnel

² Lawson, T.V. and A.D. Penwarden, "The Effects of Wind on People in the Vicinity of Buildings," Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Wind Effects on Buildings and Structures, London, 1975, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, U.K., 605-622 1976.

³ Arens, E., "Designing for Acceptable Wind Environment," Transactions Engineering Journal, ASCE 107, No. TE2, p.127-141, 1981.

⁴ Equivalent mean wind speed is defined as the mean wind, multiplied by the quantity (one plus three times the turbulence intensity) divided by 1.45.

tested for each of four primary wind directions: northwest (NW), west-northwest (WNW), west (W) and southwest (SW).

The test procedure consisted of orienting the selected configuration of the model in the atmospheric boundary layer wind-tunnel and measuring the wind speed at each of the test locations with a hot-wire anemometer. All hot-wire measurements were taken at the same series of surface points around the project site for all test configurations and wind directions.

The wind tunnel allows testing of natural atmospheric boundary layer flow past surface objects such as buildings and other structures. The tunnel has an overall length of 22 meters (m) (72 feet), a test section of 1.22 m (4 feet) wide by 1.83 m (6 feet) high, and an adjustable false ceiling. The adjustable ceiling and turbulence generators allow speeds within the tunnel to vary from 1 meter per second (m/s) to 8 m/s, or 2.2 mph to 17.9 mph.

Wind-speed measurements at each test location were made with a hot-wire anemometer, an instrument that directly relates rates of heat transfer to wind speeds by electronic signals that are proportional to the magnitude and steadiness of the wind. The hot-wire probe was calibrated to an accuracy of within 2% before the test procedure was begun. The hot-wire probe measured the analog voltage for approximately 30 seconds at each test location. When converted to digital signals, this measurement provided approximately 30,000 individual voltage samples that were averaged and the root mean square calculated for each test location. These data, when converted to velocity using the calibration curves, provided the mean velocity and turbulence values used to calculate the equivalent wind speed.

By measuring both the mean wind speeds and corresponding turbulence intensities, high wind speeds and gustiness (changes in wind speeds over short periods of time) could be determined. The ratio of near-surface speed to reference wind speed was calculated from the hot-wire measurements. The inherent uncertainty of measurements made with the hot-wire anemometer close to the surface of the model is $\pm 5\%$ of the true values.

These values were compared with the free stream wind as measured in the wind-tunnel. As a result, each wind-tunnel measurement resulted in a ratio that relates the speed of ground-level wind to the speed at the reference elevation, in this case the height of the Old San Francisco Federal Building. These ratios were the output data from the wind-tunnel tests.

These output data were reduced using a computer program that evaluated the contribution from each tested wind direction to the total wind speed measured at each location for each wind direction. The program first adjusted the wind-tunnel output ratios to account for the differences between the boundary layer profile in the wind-tunnel and the profile as measured at the Old Federal Building located at 50 United Nations Plaza. The program then computed the equivalent wind speed that conforms to the selected criterion; either the wind speed exceeded 10% of the time or the wind speed exceeded one hour or more per year. The program also computed the percentage of time that the wind would exceed the speed criterion selected, and further computed the percentage contribution of each wind direction to the equivalent wind speed and to the excess of the criterion. In addition to the computations for each tested wind direction, the program computed an average ratio and used this to compute statistics for "Other" winds, which accounted for all remaining wind directions.

The output of the computer program is presented in the Wind-Tunnel Test Results tables for normal winds and for hazardous winds. These tables, appended to this Memorandum, provide the detail of the

data and of the intermediate results that are described above. The wind tunnel ratios were included in the program input, and the results evaluated in the discussions that follow.

Wind Speed Profile Adjustments

The standard Section 148 wind test methodology implicitly assumes that the relationship between height above the ground and wind speed (referred to hereafter as the wind speed profile) is the same in the test area as at the Civic Center weather station. Given that the test site is quite near the Civic Center, no wind speed profile adjustments were needed.

III. TEST CASES AND STUDY RESULTS

Introduction

Wind-tunnel tests were conducted for each of the three test scenarios. Thirty locations were studied for the existing, project, and cumulative development scenarios. Each scenario was tested for the four prevailing wind directions: northwest, west-northwest, west and southwest. These winds are the most common in San Francisco and are therefore the most representative for evaluation of the proposed Project.

Test Locations⁵

In general, the thirty test locations surround the project on the sidewalks of Market, Tenth, Ninth, Eighth, and Mission Streets, within the open space area between the project and the existing State Compensation building, and within the alley immediately south of and adjacent to the project (see Figure 1). Locations to the west and north (upwind) of the site were tested to facilitate comparison of this wind-tunnel test with prior wind-tunnel tests.

A total of nine test points (#3-9, 26, 27) were located at positions surrounding the project site. Four points (#3-6) were within the open space area behind the adjacent State Compensation building, two points (#7, 26) were near the proposed pedestrian bridge, two points (#8, 9) were along the Ninth Street frontage, and one point (#27) was in the alley near the southeast corner of the site.

Along Ninth Street between Market and Mission Streets were twelve locations (#1, 8-17, 26). Five points (#13-17) were positioned on the west side of Ninth Street with the remaining seven points (#1, 8-12, 26) on the east side of the street, where the project site is located.

Along Market Street between Tenth and Eighth Streets were nine test locations (#1, 2, 17, 18, 21-25). Five points (#1, 2, 17, 18, 25) were located on the south side of Market Street, and four points (#21-24) were located along the north side of the street.

Eight points (#11-14, 20, 28-30) were located on Mission Street between Tenth and Eighth Streets, with four (#11, 14, 20, 28) on the north side of the street and the other four points (#12, 13, 29, 30) located on the south side of Mission Street.

⁵ The location point numbers were arbitrarily assigned, and thus hold no significance to the analysis of wind results.

Two points (#27, 28) were located within the alley just south of the project site.

Note that in describing the wind conditions on the site block or certain streets, some points were referred to in more than one group.

For the purpose of identifying the applicable wind comfort criterion of the Code, all of the thirty existing test locations were considered to be pedestrian, rather than sitting areas.

Wind Evaluation and Criteria

Just as the wind-tunnel testing was performed in accordance with the test protocols of City Planning Code Section 148, the performance requirements of Code Section 148 were used to evaluate the results of the tests. The mean wind speeds were compared to the Code's comfort criteria of 11 mph for areas of substantial pedestrian use and 7 mph for seating areas, each not to be exceeded more than 10% of the time. Separate calculations evaluated compliance with the hazard criterion. As previously noted, the wind data observed at the Old San Francisco Federal Building were not full hour average speeds as identified by the Code, so it is necessary to adjust the wind criterion speed to obtain a valid comparison with the available data and the equivalent wind speeds based on those data. When normalized to the equivalent wind speeds used here, the hazard criterion speed is equal to 36 mph, the value used in the tables. Throughout the following discussion the wind speeds reported refer to the equivalent wind speeds that would be exceeded 10% of the time when referring to the comfort criteria, and about 0.011416% of the time when referring to the hazard criterion.

Test Output

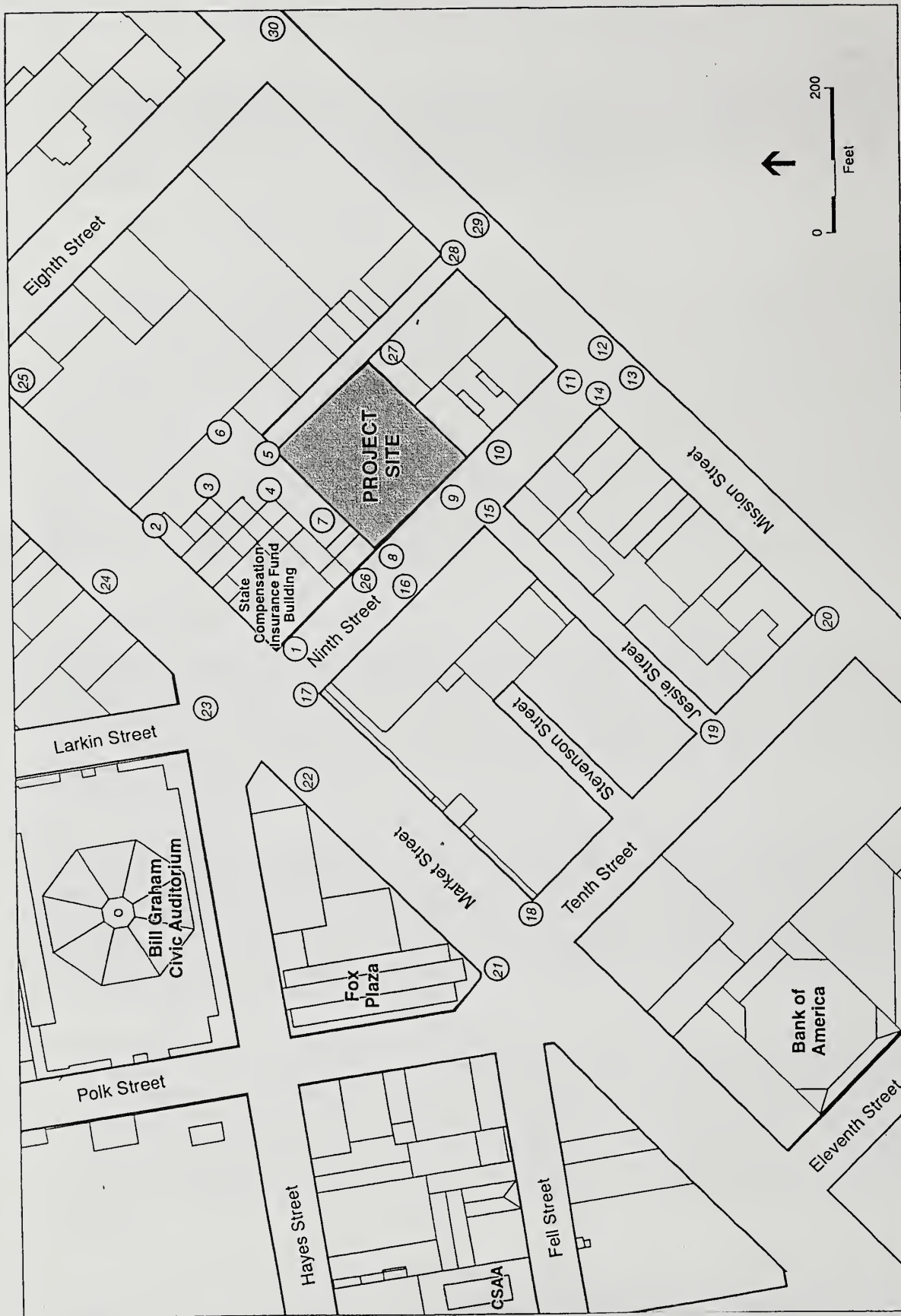
The basic wind-tunnel test data and the detailed outputs of the computer program were presented in tables of comfort criteria and hazard criteria evaluations for each of the three scenarios, Setting, Project, and the Project in the Cumulative Development Setting. These output tables, appended to this Memorandum, provide the detail of the data and the intermediate results described above. The wind-tunnel ratios and the wind profile adjustment factors for each wind direction were included. The results were evaluated in the discussions that follow.

Figure 1 identifies the measurement point locations. Summary information about the wind-tunnel test results and evaluations of compliance with the comfort and hazard criteria were presented for the existing Setting, Project and Cumulative Development scenarios in summary Tables 1 and 2. Table 1 presents the Comfort Analyses results, namely the measured 10% exceeded speed and the percentage of time that the comfort criterion is exceeded for each test location and test scenario. Table 2 presents the Wind Hazard Analyses results, the equivalent wind speed and the number of hours per year of exceedance of the hazard criterion for each test location and test scenario.

Throughout the following discussion, references were made to values from these Tables. Note that the times in hours and wind speeds in mph presented in those tables were rounded to the nearest integer value. The sums, differences and averages presented also were rounded after calculations that were made using the actual (unrounded) values. As a result, what may appear to be discrepancies in the tabular results, such as sums for each of the columns or differences between values for project and existing conditions, are simply due to the rounding of results. However, the rounded values of the differences in wind speeds and in hours exceedances in the Tables best represent the measured changes in those quantities.

Discussion

Throughout the following discussion the wind speeds reported refer to the equivalent wind speeds that would be exceeded 10% of the time when referring to the Pedestrian-Comfort Criterion, and winds exceeded 1 hour per year when referring to the Hazard Criterion.



55 Ninth Street / 201480 ■
Figure 1
 Wind Test Point Location Map

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

TEST 1 - THE EXISTING WIND ENVIRONMENT

The Existing Setting

The existing setting consists generally of the existing buildings in the vicinity of the site. Development in the vicinity is characterized by a combination of some low-rise buildings and vacant land, with several mid- and high-rise structures fronting Market Street and interspersed throughout the area. Some of the more notable mid- and high-rise buildings include the CSAA building on Van Ness Avenue between Fell and Hayes Streets, the Fox Plaza building on Market Street between Polk and Hayes Streets, and the Bank of America data center building on Market Street between Tenth and Eleventh Streets.

Existing Comfort Criterion Conditions

Some of the existing conditions are among the windiest in San Francisco. The average wind speed for all 30 test points in this general vicinity would be slightly above 14 mph. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more occur at 17 of the total 30 locations. The highest wind speed in the vicinity (23 mph) occurs northwest of the project site, northwest of the site, at the southernmost corner of Fox Plaza, near the intersection of Market and Polk Streets (#21). Nine of the 30 points (#3, 4, 7, 10, 11, 14, 24, 28, 30) currently meet the Planning Code's pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11 mph. See Figure 1 and Table 1.

At the nine points surrounding the project site (#3-9, 26, 27), wind speeds are between 9 and 20 mph. The highest wind speeds (20 mph) occur within the open space area behind the adjacent State Compensation building (#6); wind speeds at the other three points within the open space area (#3-5) range from 9 to 15 mph. Wind speeds at the two points adjacent to the pedestrian bridge (#7, 26) are 9 mph and 18 mph, respectively, and at the two points along the Ninth Street frontage (#8, 9) are 18 mph and 16 mph, respectively. At the point in the alley near the southeast corner of the site (#27), wind speeds are currently 14 mph. Three of the nine points (#3, 4, 7) currently meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

Wind speeds at the 12 locations along Ninth Street between Market and Mission Streets (#1, 8-17, 26) range from 11 to 18 mph. The highest wind speeds (18 mph) both occur near the southwest corner of the State Compensation building (#8, 26). Along the west side of Ninth Street, wind speeds at all five points (#13-17) range from 11 to 15 mph; only one point (#14) meets the pedestrian-comfort criterion. Wind speeds range from 11 to 18 mph at the seven points on the east side of Ninth Street (#1, 8-12, 26), where, as noted above, the highest wind speeds occur. Three of the total 12 test locations (#10, 11, 14) currently meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

At the 9 points along Market Street between Tenth and Eighth Streets (#1, 2, 17, 18, 21-25), wind speeds range from 11 to 20 mph. The highest wind speed (23 mph) occurs northwest of the site, at the southernmost corner of Fox Plaza, near the intersection of Market and Polk Streets (#21). Wind speeds range from 12 to 20 mph at all 5 points (#1, 2, 17, 18, 25) along the south side of Market Street; none of the points meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion. Wind speeds range from 11 to 23 mph at the 4 points (#21-24) along the north side of Market Street; only one of those 4 (#24) meets the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

The wind speeds of the 8 locations (#11-14, 20, 28-30) on Mission Street between Tenth and Eighth Streets, range from 9 to 15 mph. The highest wind speed (15 mph) occurs to the west of the site, at the

northeast corner of Tenth and Mission Streets (#20). Wind speeds range from 11 to 15 mph at the 4 points (#11, 14, 20, 28) along the north side of Mission Street, and from 9 to 14 mph at the 4 points (#12, 13, 29, 30) along the south side of the street. Four of the 8 points (#11, 14, 28, 30) currently meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

Wind speeds of the two points (#27, 28) located within the alley just south of the project site are 14 mph and 11 mph, respectively. The point closest to Mission Street (#28) meets the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

Existing Hazard Conditions

The Code's wind hazard criterion is currently exceeded at seven (#5, 6, 8, 9, 18, 21, 16) of the total 30 test locations. The total duration of these 7 exceedances is 210 hours per year. See Table 2.

Overall, 5 of the 7 wind hazard exceedances (#5, 6, 8, 9, 26) occur at locations adjacent to the currently vacant project site. The longest duration exceedance occurs near the northeast corner of the site (#6 – 60 hours per year), in the open space area behind the State Compensation building. Of those remaining, another point (#5 – 1 hour per year) is located within the open space area, and three (#8 – 19 hours per year, #9 – 1 hour per year, #26 – 16 hours per year) are along the site's Ninth Street frontage. The total duration of these five exceedances adjacent to the site is 97 hours per year.

The remaining 2 wind hazard exceedances (#18, 21) now occur northwest of the project site, at locations on Market Street near the high-rise Fox Plaza building. The longest duration exceedance occurs at the southernmost corner of the Fox Plaza building (#21 – 93 hours per year), and the lower of the two exceedances (#18 – 19 hours per year) occurs directly across Market Street, at Tenth Street. The total duration of these two Market Street exceedances is 112 hours per year.

In addition to the hazard exceedances measured in this test, other existing hazard exceedances are known to exist nearby. For example, the wind speeds at many other locations along Van Ness Ave, Fell, Polk, Market, and Tenth Streets are expected to exceed the hazard criterion under existing conditions.

Winds in the vicinity of the site are dominated by the presence of the Fox Plaza, CSAA, and Bank of America buildings, which interact to create very strong, turbulent winds at and near ground levels at the bases of the buildings and generally within a several block radius of the triangular area roughly outlined by the three buildings.

Furthermore, prior wind tests have shown that the wind conditions in this area are chaotic – the locations of the exceedances can be moved and their durations can be substantially altered by relatively small changes in the configuration of buildings or the addition of buildings to vacant properties within a block of the high-rise buildings in this area.

Table 1 **Wind Comfort Analysis - Existing and Project Conditions**
Proposed 55 Ninth Street Project
San Francisco, California
Wind-Tunnel Test, April 28, 2002

References		Existing		e x c e e d e n c e	Project			e x c e e d e n c e	Project + Cumulative			e x c e e d e n c e
Location Number	Comfort Criterion Speed (mph)	Measured Equivalent Wind Speed (mph)	Percent of Time Wind Speed Exceeds Criterion		Measured Equivalent Wind Speed (mph)	Percent of Time Wind Speed Exceeds Criterion	Speed Change Relative to Existing (mph)		Measured Equivalent Wind Speed (mph)	Percent of Time Wind Speed Exceeds Criterion	Speed Change Relative to Project (mph)	
1	11	12	14	e	11	12	-1	-	12	16	1	+
2	11	20	38	e	19	36		e	20	38	1	=
3	11	9	5	e	9	6		e	8	2	-1	=
4	11	10	6	e	9	4	-1	e	9	4		=
5	11	15	18	e	12	13	-3	e	12	12		=
6	11	20	31	e	18	29	-2	e	18	30		=
7	11	9	3	e	10	8	1	e	10	7		=
8	11	18	31	e	15	21	-4	e	12	12	-3	=
9	11	16	26	e	16	24		e	17	26	1	=
10	11	11	9	e	13	20	3	+	13	20		=
11	11	11	9	e	14	22	4	+	14	21	-1	=
12	11	12	12	e	13	17	1	e	12	13	-1	=
13	11	14	20	e	15	26	1	e	15	23		=
14	11	11	10	e	11	10		e	11	10		=
15	11	13	15	e	13	14		e	14	16	1	=
16	11	15	18	e	16	18		e	15	17	-1	=
17	11	15	25	e	14	22	-1	e	14	22		=
18	11	18	31	e	18	32		e	17	29	-1	=
19	11	17	30	e	18	33	1	e	14	19	-4	=
20	11	15	23	e	15	24		e	15	24		=
21	11	23	47	e	23	46		e	23	46		=
22	11	12	11	e	12	13	1	e	11	11	-1	-
23	11	15	25	e	14	20	-1	e	16	28	2	=
24	11	11	9	e	11	11		e	11	11		=
25	11	17	31	e	18	32	1	e	18	32	-1	=
26	11	18	29	e	12	14	-5	e	13	16		=
27	11	14	16	e	18	20	4	e	18	20		=
28	11	11	9	e	10	7	-1	e	8	2	-2	-
29	11	13	17	e	12	13	-1	e	11	11	-1	-
30	11	9	5	e	9	5		e	9	4		-
Average mph / %		14.1	19%		14.0	19%	-0.1		13.6	18%	-0.3	
Exceedances:		Total	21		Total	22			Total	21		
Counts:		Existing	21	e	Existing Exceedance	20	e		Prior Exceedance	20	=	
					New, Due to Project	2	+		New, Due to Cumulative	1	+	
					New, at new Location	0	#		New, at new Location	0	#	
					Exceedance Eliminated	1	-		Exceedance Eliminated	2	-	

Note: Wind speeds and durations are rounded, so column totals and row differences may not add. See Section II, Test Output

Table 2 **Wind Hazard Analysis -Existing and Project Conditions**
Proposed 55 Ninth Street Project
San Francisco, California
Wind-Tunnel Test, April 28, 2002

References		Existing			Project				Project + Cumulative			
Location Number	Wind Hazard Criterion Speed (mph)	Measured Equivalent Wind Speed (mph)	Hours per year Wind Speed Exceeds Hazard Criterion	exceeds	Measured Equivalent Wind Speed (mph)	Hours per year Wind Speed Exceeds Hazard Criterion	Hours Change Relative to Setting	exceeds	Measured Equivalent Wind Speed (mph)	Hours per year Wind Speed Exceeds Hazard Criterion	Hours Change Relative to Project Phase I	exceeds
1	36	22			20				21			
2	36	34			33				35			
3	36	19			22				16			
4	36	18			19				19			
5	36	36	1	e	33		-1	-	29			
6	36	48	60	e	48	58	-2	e	46	42	-16	=
7	36	17			23				22			
8	36	42	19	e	33		-19	-	28			
9	36	37	1	e	36		-1	-	36	1	1	
10	36	23			31				32			
11	36	23			31				30			
12	36	20			22				21			
13	36	26			27				25			
14	36	25			25				23			
15	36	31			30				31			
16	36	35			37	2	2	+	34		-2	-
17	36	31			30				33			
18	36	42	19	e	40	12	-8	e	40	10	-2	=
19	36	30			32				24			
20	36	27			26				27			
21	36	50	93	e	49	81	-12	e	48	62	-18	=
22	36	30			34				28			
23	36	25			25				27			
24	36	25			24				25			
25	36	31			33				32			
26	36	41	16	e	23		-16	-	29			
27	36	32			45	36	36	+	43	26	-10	=
28	36	21			20				19			
29	36	23			22				20			
30	36	24			21				20			
Average mph / hr		29.6	210		29.8	188	-21.9		28.9	141	-46.7	
Exceedances:		Total	7		Total	5			Total	4		
Counts:		Existing	7	e	Existing Exceedance	3		e	Prior Exceedance	4		=
					New, Due to Project	2		+	New, Due to Phase II	0		+
					New, at new Location	0		#	New, at new Location	0		#
					Exceedance Eliminated	4		-	Exceedance Eliminated	1		-

Note: Wind speeds and durations are rounded, so column totals and row differences may not add. See Section II, Test Output

TEST 2 - PROJECT WIND IMPACTS

Project in the Existing Setting

The project setting consists of the 55 Ninth Street project model, developed from plans provided by the project architects, HOK Architects, and replaces the vacant lot in the existing setting for the test. The project is a lot-line to lot-line building with a roof height of about 162 feet, with an approximately 40 foot tall penthouse and mechanical tower. A pedestrian bridge would link the project to the existing State Compensation building at the third floor.

Comfort Criterion Conditions

With the project, wind conditions would be slightly less windy; the average wind speed for all 30 test points would decrease slightly, but would equal 14 mph. Wind speeds in pedestrian areas would range from 9 to 23 mph. The project would eliminate the existing pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedance (#1) located at the northwest corner of the State Compensation building on Ninth Street, and would create 2 new exceedances (#10, 11) downwind of the site along the east side of Ninth Street. Eight of the total 30 points would meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11 mph. See Figure 1 and Table 1.

With the project, as compared to existing conditions, wind speeds would increase at 9 locations, remain unchanged at 11 locations and decrease at 10 locations. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more would occur at 14 locations, and the highest wind speed (23 mph) in the vicinity would continue to occur at the southernmost corner of the Fox Plaza building, at Market Street (#21).

With the project, wind speeds would range between 9 and 18 mph at the nine points surrounding the project site (#3-9, 26, 27). Overall, wind conditions at the locations surrounding the site would improve, with the exception of the point downwind of the site in the alley (#27), where the wind speed would increase by 4 mph. At the four points within the open space area behind the adjacent State Compensation building (#3-6), wind speeds would remain the same (#3) or decrease between 1 and 3 mph (#4-6). At the two points adjacent to the pedestrian bridge (#7, 26), wind speeds would increase slightly by 1 mph (#7) or decrease by 5 mph (#26). Wind speeds at the two points adjacent to the Ninth Street frontage (#8, 9) would decrease by 4 mph, or remain the same, respectively. Three of the nine locations (#3, 4, 7) would continue to meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion value.

Wind speeds at the 12 locations along Ninth Street between Market and Mission Streets (#1, 8-17, 26) would range from 11 to 16 mph. Wind speed changes between ± 1 mph would occur at all but four of the 12 points; at the 2 points immediately south and downwind of the site (#10, 11), wind speed increases of 3 and 4 mph, respectively, would occur, and at the 2 points adjacent to the pedestrian bridge (#8, 26) wind speed decreases of 4 and 5 mph, respectively, would occur. A decrease of 1 mph at the existing exceedance at the northwest corner of the State Compensation building (#1) would result in its elimination, while increases of 3 and 4 mph, respectively, would create 2 new exceedances at the locations directly south of and downwind of the site (#10, 11). Only two of the total 12 locations (#1, 14) would meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion value.

With the project, wind speeds at the 9 points along Market Street between Tenth and Eighth Streets (#1, 2, 17, 18, 21-25) would range from 11 to 23 mph. Wind speeds at the points upwind from the site would remain unchanged (#18, 21), or would change by ± 1 mph (#1, 17, 22, 23); wind speed changes of 0 to 1 mph would occur at the 3 points (#2, 24, 25) downwind from the site. The decrease of 1 mph at the northwest corner of the State Compensation building at Ninth and Market Streets (#1) would eliminate the existing exceedance; two of the 9 points (#1, 24) would meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

Wind speeds would range from 9 to 15 mph at the 8 points on Mission Street between Tenth and Eighth Streets (#11-14, 20, 28-30). The wind speeds at the intersection of Mission and Ninth Streets (#11-14) would increase by 0 to 4 mph; the increase of 4 mph at the northeast corner of the intersection (#11) would create a new exceedance. The wind speeds downwind of the project site would remain unchanged (#30) or decrease by 1 mph (#28, 29); the point near Tenth Street would also remain unchanged (#20). Three of the 8 points would continue to meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

Wind speeds at the 2 points (#27, 28) located within the alley just south of the project site would be 18 mph and 10 mph, respectively. The wind speed at the point adjacent to the southeast corner of the site (#27) would increase by 4 mph, whereas the point closest to Mission Street (#28) would decrease by 1 mph, and would continue to meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion.

Project Hazard Conditions

With the project, the Code's wind hazard criterion would be exceeded at five locations (#6, 16, 18, 21, 27), for a total duration of 188 hours per year. The Code's wind hazard criterion is currently exceeded at 7 of the 30 locations, with the total duration occurring for 210 hours per year. See Table 2.

The project would add 2 new exceedances, one directly across the street from the project site (#16 – 2 hours per year) and the other at the southeast corner of the site in the alley (#27 – 36 hours per year). The duration of the new exceedances would be 38 hours per year.

The project would eliminate 4 existing exceedances, all adjacent to the project site. One exceedance would be eliminated at the northeast corner of the site, within the open space behind the State Compensation building (#5 – 1 hour per year), and three along the Ninth Street frontage (#8 – 19 hours per year, #9 – 1 hour per year, #26 – 16 hours per year). The duration of the eliminated exceedances would be 37 hours per year.

In addition to eliminating 4 existing exceedances and adding 2 new exceedances, the project would affect the duration of 3 existing exceedances by decreasing the duration of the 3 points (#6, 18, 21) by 22 hours per year.

Overall, the total duration of the exceedances with the project in place would be 188 hours per year, a decrease of about 22 hours per year from the 210 hours per year duration of the existing wind hazard exceedances.

Project Wind Mitigation Measures

Discussion

Under Section 148 of the City Planning Code, new buildings and additions to buildings may not cause ground-level winds to exceed the wind comfort criteria values more than ten percent of the time year round between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. If existing wind speeds exceed the comfort level, new buildings and additions must be designed to reduce ambient wind speeds to meet the requirements. Section 148 also establishes a hazard criterion, which is a 36 mph hourly-average equivalent wind speed for a single full hour. Buildings may not cause winds that meet or exceed this criterion.

The siting of a large structure is expected to change wind flows, speeding up the wind at some locations and slowing it elsewhere in the vicinity. As can be seen in the case of this site located in a particularly windy area, even a moderate-size structure placed on this site can be expected to result in changes in the durations of criterion exceedances and changes in the locations at which those criterion exceedances occur. Experience indicates that for buildings in very windy areas it is common for new buildings to eliminate some existing exceedances and create others. In practice it is not always possible to mitigate such remaining exceedances (as required by the language of the Planning Code).

In this case, 21 pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances occur under the existing conditions. The project would eliminate 1 existing pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedance, and create 2 new exceedances, for a net total of 22 pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances.

The project would create 2 new wind hazard exceedances, eliminate 4 existing exceedances, and decrease the duration of 3 existing exceedances. Overall, the project would reduce the total duration of wind hazard exceedances in the vicinity.

Given the existing windy conditions of the site and vicinity and the magnitude of changes in wind conditions that can reasonably be expected from the project, it is not believed possible to design any structure that fully meets the goals of the project and which fully reduces ambient wind speeds to meet Section 148 comfort and hazard criteria at all locations in the vicinity of the site.

Mitigation Measures

The most notable increase in wind speeds due to the project would occur at 3 locations adjacent to and downwind of the site (#10, 11, 27), where speeds would increase by 3 and 4 mph. The increase at 2 of those locations (#10, 11) would create 2 new pedestrian-comfort exceedances. However, a decrease of 1 mph at the northwest corner of the State Compensation building (#1) would eliminate an existing exceedance.

In addition, the project would add 2 new hazard criterion exceedances at a point directly across Ninth Street from the site (#16) and at the southeast corner of the site (#27), and would eliminate the 4 existing hazards located adjacent to the site (#5, 8, 9, 26). Further, the project would decrease the total duration of the 3 existing hazards located near the Fox Plaza building (#18, 21) and within the open space area behind the State Compensation building (#6) by a net of 22 hours per year.

For this site, one should not assume that reducing the size of the project or changes in the design of the project would have any proportional effect on the pedestrian-comfort exceedances, however, the duration of existing hazard exceedances could be affected by such changes.

The addition of large street trees (30-40 feet wide and 40-50 feet tall) along the Ninth Street sidewalk adjacent to the project site could noticeably reduce wind speeds that would occur in pedestrian areas. However, street trees would not necessarily provide sufficient wind speed reductions to eliminate the two new exceedances of the pedestrian-comfort criterion or the two new exceedances of the wind hazard criterion.

Given that several low structures and some vacant lands now exist to the northwest and west across Market Street, further development of upwind buildings to the height and bulk limits of the Zoning would be expected to reduce the speeds for the northwest, west-northwest, and west winds reaching the project, and thus reduce the wind speeds on sidewalks around and downwind of the project.

Future infill development on available vacant lands south of Jessie Street between Ninth and Tenth Streets to the height and bulk limits of the Zoning would be expected to reduce the speeds for the southwest winds reaching the project site, as shown in Test 3, below.

TEST 3 –CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT WIND IMPACTS

Cumulative Development Within the Vicinity of the Project Site

The cumulative development scenario consists of the 55 Ninth Street project and the potential infill development along Jessie Street, between Ninth and Tenth Streets.

Comfort Criterion Conditions

With the project and the infill development, wind speeds would range from 8 to 23 mph. The average wind speed for all 30 points would decrease by less than 1 mph, although the wind speed would remain near 14 mph. Nine of the 30 test points (#3, 4, 7, 14, 22, 24, 28-30) would meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion value. The project and infill development would eliminate 2 pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances (#22, 29), and add 1 new pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedance (#1) to the project setting. See Figure 1 and Table 1.

With the cumulative development, as compared to project conditions, wind speeds would increase at 5 locations, decrease at 11 locations and remain unchanged at 14 locations. The highest wind speed in the vicinity (23 mph) would continue to occur at the southernmost corner of the Fox Plaza building, northwest of the project site (#21).

Wind conditions within the immediate vicinity of the project site would slightly improve. Wind speeds at six of the nine points surrounding the project site (#4-7, 26, 27) would remain the same, and at a point within the open space area (#3) would decrease by 1 mph. At one of the two points adjacent to the Ninth

Street frontage (#8), wind speeds would decrease by 3 mph, while at the other point (#9) wind speeds would increase by 1 mph.

In general, wind speed changes of ± 1 mph would occur at 12 of the total 30 test point locations (#1-3, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 18, 22, 25, 29) adjacent to, or within the immediate vicinity of the project site. At one of these locations (#1), the 1 mph increase in wind speed would create a new pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedance, whereas at 2 other locations (#22, 29), the decrease of 1 mph would eliminate an existing exceedance (#22, 29). Other notable wind speed changes include an increase of 2 mph that would occur to the north of the project site on Market Street (#23), and decreases between 2 and 4 mph that would occur at a point adjacent to (#8), upwind of (#19), and downwind of the site (#28).

Cumulative Development Hazard Conditions

Compared to project conditions, the Code's wind hazard criterion would continue to be exceeded at four (#6, 18, 21, 27) of the total 30 test locations. The total duration of these 4 exceedances would be 141 hours per year. See Table 2.

The addition of the infill development to the project setting would eliminate 1 of the 2 new hazard exceedance locations created by the project (#16 – 2 hours per year), directly across Ninth Street from the project site, for a total decrease in duration of 2 hours per year. In addition to eliminating the 1 exceedance, the addition of the infill development would affect the duration of the 4 hazard exceedances (#6, 18, 21, 27) by decreasing the durations of all 4 points by 46 hours per year.

Overall, the total duration of the wind hazard exceedances with the addition of the infill development would be 141 hours per year, a decrease of about 47 hours per year from the 188 hours per year duration of the wind hazard exceedances in the project setting.

IV. SUMMARY

General Conditions and Comfort Criteria

Some of the existing conditions are among the windiest in San Francisco. The average wind speed for all 30 test points in this general vicinity would be slightly above 14 mph. Wind speeds in pedestrian areas now range from 9 to 23 mph. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more occur at 17 of the total 30 locations. The highest wind speed in the vicinity (23 mph) occurs upwind of the site at the southernmost corner of the Fox Plaza building, near the intersection of Market and Polk Streets. Nine of the 30 points currently meet the Planning Code's pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11 mph.

With the project, wind conditions would be equally windy; the average wind speed for all 30 test points would equal 14 mph. Wind speeds in pedestrian areas would also range from 9 to 23 mph. Wind speeds would increase at 9 locations, remain unchanged at 11 locations and decrease at 10 locations. Wind speeds of 14 mph or more would occur at 14 locations, and the highest wind speed (23 mph) in the vicinity would continue to occur at the southernmost corner of the Fox Plaza building, near the intersection of Market and Polk Streets. The project would eliminate 1 existing pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedance, and would create 2 new exceedances downwind of the site. Eight of the total 30 points would meet the pedestrian-comfort criterion value of 11 mph.

Given that several low structures and some vacant lands now exist to the northwest and west across Market Street, further development of upwind buildings to the height and bulk limits of the Zoning would be expected to reduce the speeds for the northwest, west-northwest, and west winds reaching the project, and thus reduce the wind speeds on sidewalks around and downwind of the project.

Future infill development on available vacant lands south of Jessie Street between Ninth and Tenth Streets to the height and bulk limits of the Zoning would be expected to reduce southwest winds reaching the project site, as shown in Test 3 – Cumulative Development Within the Vicinity. In that test, the addition of infill development to the project setting generally improved wind conditions at locations immediately surrounding the project site.

Wind Hazard Conditions

The Code's wind hazard criterion is currently exceeded at 7 of the 30 test locations. The total duration of these 7 exceedances is 210 hours per year. With the project, the Code's wind hazard criterion would be exceeded at 5 locations; the total duration of the exceedances would be 188 hours per year, a decrease of 22 hours per year from the existing exceedances. The project would create 2 new wind hazard exceedances, eliminate 4 existing exceedances, and decrease the duration of 3 existing exceedances. Overall, the project would reduce the total duration of wind hazard exceedances in the vicinity.

The addition of the infill development to the project setting would eliminate 1 of the 2 new hazard exceedance locations created by the project, for a total decrease in duration of 2 hours per year. In addition to eliminating the 1 exceedance, the addition of the infill development would affect the duration of the 4 hazard exceedances decreasing the durations of all 4 points by 46 hours per year. Overall, the total duration of the wind hazard exceedances with the addition of the infill development would be 141 hours per year, a decrease of about 47 hours per year from the 188 hours per year duration of the wind hazard exceedances in the project setting.

Project Mitigation Measures

Given the existing windy conditions of the site and vicinity and the modest changes in wind conditions that can reasonably be expected from the project, it may not be possible to design any structure that fully meets the goals of the project and that fully reduces ambient wind speeds to meet Section 148 comfort criteria at all locations. For this site, one should not assume that simply reducing the size of the project or changes in the design of the project would have any effect on the pedestrian-comfort criterion exceedances, however, the duration of existing hazard exceedances could be affected by such changes.

The addition of large street trees (30-40 feet wide and 40-50 feet tall) along the Ninth Street sidewalk adjacent to the site could noticeably reduce wind speeds that would occur in pedestrian area, however, this mitigation would not necessarily provide sufficient wind reductions to eliminate the existing exceedances of the pedestrian-comfort criterion or the new exceedance of the hazard criterion.

ATTACHMENTS – WIND-TUNNEL DATA AND CALCULATIONS

Pedestrian Comfort Analysis

10% Exceeded Winds

In the following tables for the Comfort Criterion tests, the output for each location is presented in three-line groups. The ratios of pedestrian-level wind speeds to the 132-ft. height reference wind speeds at the old Civic Center meteorological station are shown in the first line of output for each location.

The second line of the output shows the pedestrian level wind speeds, in mph, which would be exceeded 10% of the time for each measurement location. Section 148 of the Planning Code sets comfort criteria of 11 mph for areas of substantial public pedestrian use and 7 mph for public seating areas. These criteria are not to be exceeded more than 10% of the time.

The third line of output for each location shows the criterion speed and the percentage of the time the criterion would be exceeded. The rows labeled CONTRIB tabulate the percentage contribution to the total or the exceedance from each wind direction. The SUMs are the equivalent number of events.

Wind Hazard Analysis

1 Hour per Year Exceeded Winds

In the following tables for the Hazard Criterion tests, the output for each location is presented in three-line groups. The ratios of pedestrian-level wind speeds to the 132-ft. height reference wind speeds at the old Civic Center meteorological station are shown in the first line of output for each location.

The second line of the output shows the pedestrian level wind speeds, in mph, which would be exceeded one hour per year (0.01141552512% of the time) for each measurement location tested. Section 148 of the Planning Code sets a wind hazard criterion that an hourly average speed of 36 mph for a full hour (a one-minute average speed of 36 mph) not be reached or exceeded one hour per year.

The third line of output for each location shows the criterion speed and the percentage of the time the criterion would be exceeded. The rows labeled CONTRIB tabulate the percentage contribution to the total or the exceedance from each wind direction. The SUMs are the equivalent number of events.

Appendix C

Intersection Level of Service Designations

APPENDIX C

INTERSECTION LEVEL OF SERVICE DESIGNATIONS

TABLE C-1
SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION LEVEL OF SERVICE DEFINITIONS BASED ON DELAY

LEVEL OF SERVICE	TYPICAL DELAY (SEC/VEH)	TYPICAL TRAFFIC CONDITION
A	≤ 5.0	Insignificant Delays: No approach phase is fully utilized and no vehicle waits longer than one red indication.
B	5.1 - 15.0	Minimal Delays: an occasional approach phase is fully utilized. Drivers begin to feel restricted.
C	15.1 - 25.0	Acceptable Delays: Major approach phase may become fully utilized. Most drivers feel somewhat restricted.
D	25.1 - 40.0	Tolerable Delays: Drivers may wait through more than one red indication. Queues may develop but dissipate rapidly, without excessive delays.
E	40.1 - 60.0	Significant Delays: Conditions are generally the limit of acceptable delays. Vehicles may wait through several signal cycles and long queues of vehicles from upstream.
F	> 60.0	Excessive Delays: Represents unacceptable conditions with extremely long delays. Queues may block upstream intersections.

Sources: *Highway Capacity Manual*, Highway Research Board, Special Report No. 209, Washington, D.C., 1985; *Interim Materials on Highway Capacity*, Circular 212, Transportation Research Board, 1980.

TABLE C-2
ARTERIAL LEVEL OF SERVICE DEFINITIONS BASED ON TRAVEL SPEED

ARTERIAL CLASS	I	II	III
RANGE OF FREE FLOW SPEEDS (mph)	45 to 35	35 to 30	35 to 25
TYPICAL FREE FLOW SPEED (mph)	40	35	27
LEVEL OF SERVICE	AVERAGE TRAVEL SPEED (mph)		
A	≥ 35	≥ 30	≥ 25
B	≥ 28	≥ 24	≥ 19
C	≥ 22	≥ 18	≥ 13
D	≥ 17	≥ 14	≥ 9
E	≥ 13	≥ 10	≥ 7
F	< 13	< 10	< 7

Level of Service A:	Primarily free-flow operations at average travel speeds, usually about 90 percent of the free flow speed for the arterial class. Vehicles are completely unimpeded in their ability to maneuver within the traffic stream. Stopped delay at signalized intersections is minimal.
Level of Service B:	Reasonably unimpeded operations at average travel speeds, usually about 70 percent of the free flow speed for the arterial class. The ability to maneuver within the traffic stream is only slightly restricted and stopped delays are not bothersome. Drivers are not generally subjected to appreciable tension.
Level of Service C:	Stable operations. However, ability to maneuver and change lanes in mid-block locations may be more restricted than in LOS B, and longer queues and/or adverse signal coordination may contribute to lower average travel speeds of about 50 percent of the average free flow speed for the arterial class. Motorists will experience an appreciable tension while driving.
Level of Service D:	Borders on a range on which small increases in flow may cause substantial increases in approach delay and, hence, decreases in arterial speed. This may be due to adverse signal progression, inappropriate signal timing, high volumes, or some combination of these. Average travel speeds are about 40 percent of free flow speed.
Level of Service E:	Significant approach delays and average travel speeds of one-third the free flow speed or lower. Such operations are caused by some combination or adverse progression, high signal density, extensive queuing at critical intersections, and inappropriate signal timing.
Level of Service F:	Extremely low speeds below one-third to one-quarter of the free flow speed. Intersection congestion is likely at critical signalized locations, with high approach delays resulting. Adverse progression is frequently a contributor to this condition.

Source: Highway Capacity Manual, Special Report 209, Transportation Research Board, 1980.

Appendix D

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